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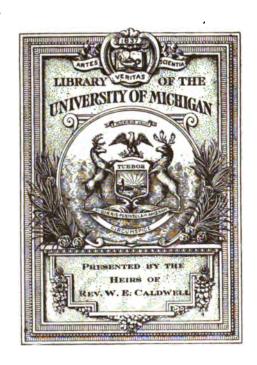


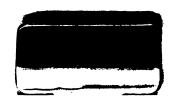
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## LECTURES

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## LECTURES

# CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

JOSHUA BATES, D. D. PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN DUDLEY, MASS.

ANDOVER: PRINTED BY ALLEN, MORRILL & WARDWELL. 1846.

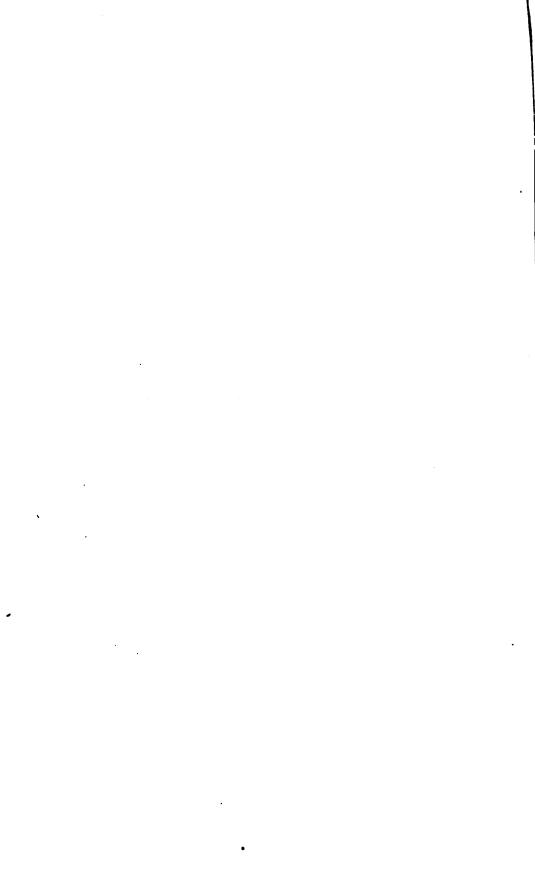
### ADVERTISEMENT.

Some of the Lectures in this volume were written, and first delivered in Dedham, Mass., while I was pastor of the first Congregational church in that place. Others were prepared in Middlebury, Vt., during the period of my connection with Middlebury College, and addressed to the students of that Institution. Others still, were written in the city of Washington, D. C., and delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives, while I was acting as chaplain of the Twenty-Sixth Congress of the United States, in the winter of 1839 and 1840.

They are now, in connection with two or three discourses, more recently prepared, committed to the press, by the request of particular friends, and with the hope, that they will be acceptable and useful to all who read them.

JOSHUA BATES.

Dudley, March 20, 1846.



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## LECTURE I.

#### MAN IMMORTAL AND ACCOUNTABLE.

#### JOB XIV. 14.

#### IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?

This inquiry, always interesting to dying men, becomes peculiarly solemn, on occasions like the present. The recent enunciation in this Hall\* of the death of three designated members of the House, is indeed calculated to remind us of the frailty and uncertainty of the present life, and to excite a deep solicitude concerning the future.

That man must die, we know. For in proof of this we have the unequivocal testimony of experience and observation. We perceive, that man is a creature of change. He cometh forth, like a flower, and is cut down. He fleeth also, as a shadow, and continueth not. The seeds of dissolution are planted within us. We feel our frames decay. We behold our fellow-creatures, in quick succession, dropping into the grave, and mingling with kindred dust. Reason and analogy teach us, that we, formed of the same materials, possessing the same nature and subject to the same casualties, must sooner or later follow them. Thus we

<sup>\*</sup> The Hall of the House of Representatives, in the Capitol of the U. S. A.

The deceased members, to whom allusion is here made, and who died before they had taken their seats in the House, were the Hon. WILLIAM W. POTTER of Pensylvania, the Hon. ALBERT G. HARRISON of Missouri and the Hon. JAMES C. ALVORD of Massachusetts.

know, that we must die. But, "if a man die, shall he live again?" Shall he return again to his house? Shall he revisit his friends on earth? Shall the eyes, that have seen him, see him here again; and the ears, that have heard him, be again delighted with the sound of his voice? Shall his cold bosom be again warmed with the gentle current of life? Shall his nerveless arm, already mouldering into dust, again resume its wonted strength? Shall he come forth from the tomb, with new life, and wipe away the tears of bereaved friendship? "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again; and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground: yet through the scent of water, it will bud, and bring forth boughs, like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Where is he? Gone! gone to return no more! gone to that country, whence no traveller returns! He shall return no more to his house; neither shall his place know him any more. He is cut off forever, from all earthly objects and earthly pursuits. voice of weeping friends cannot call him back; neither can any, by any means, redeem his brother from death, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should be liberated from the grave, and not see corruption.

Thus is it certain, not only, that we shall die, but that death will close forever our earthly existence. Thus far knowledge extends; and here scepticism itself is compelled to be silent.

Still, however, the question returns upon us; and returns with increasing interest: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Is this world the only stage of human action, or shall we hereafter pass through new and untried scenes? Is death an everlasting sleep, or will

our minds exist after the dissolution of the body? Will our conscious existence end in time, or will our powers and susceptibilities continue with eternity?

In answer to these inquiries, reason can do but little. The answer falls not within the limits of human knowledge. It lies altogether beyond the reach of experience and observation. The grave covers it with the blackness of impenetrable darkness. The subject is properly a matter of pure revelation; and the assent of the understanding to any proposition concerning it, is in strict propriety of language an act of faith. By some, therefore, it is said, that we should never attempt to reason on the subject. And it must be admitted. that a practical and experimental believer in Christianity; a real, well-established Christian, needs not the feeble arguments, drawn from analogy, to strengthen his faith, encourage his hope and urge him forward in the path of duty, and in the way which leadeth to everlasting life. Such faith is sufficient of itself, to overcome the world and lead to heaven. Such hope purifieth the heart; and is an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. But since all have not this established faith and elevating hope; since some will indulge themselves in speculations beyond the limits of inductive reasoning, and follow the phantoms of slight analogy into the regions of scepticism; since many, who are professedly inquiring after truth, have suffered themselves to be perplexed by objections, founded on human ignorance, and have followed the flights of fancy and the wanderings of imagination, till their minds have become bewildered in a labyrinth of their own creation, and harassed with doubts which have no solid foundation; it becomes us to pursue them, and call them back to sober reason; to resort to the very

source of these objections and doubts, and attempt their removal.

In the few remarks which I have to make in answer to the inquiry, expressed in the words of the text, the subject of the immortality of the soul will be kept as distinct as possible from that of the resurrection of the body, and from all inquiries concerning the nature and essence and peculiar properties of what an inspired apostle denominates "a spiritual body."

When we look immediately on death, it appears to be the end of man. What can you behold in a pale corpse, which in the smallest degree indicates future The eye is closed; the arm is nerveless; the blood ceases to circulate; the heart no longer beats; the breath has departed out of the nostrils; and the bosom is cold, as the clod of the valley. That corporeal frame, which a little while ago was vigorous and active, is now destitute of vital heat, of animal life, of sensitive and intellectual power. Perception reflection and all the mental faculties, seem to have expired with the cessation of the bodily functions. Nothing remains in our view, but a lump of matter, already crumbling into dust. Thus death, at first sight, appears to be the end of man. But a moment's reflection will remove this first impression, and give a new aspect to this dreary scene. We should remember, that the nature and properties of matter and mind are entirely distinct and altogether different from each other: that the changes in the one, therefore, give us no clue from analogy, by which to discover the effects of death on the other. The human body is a compound substance; and its constituent parts are in a state of constant fluctuation. Observation and experiment prove, that the matter, which constitutes our

bodies, is at no two periods the same. Particles are constantly passing from us; and others, in succession, supply their places, from the air we inhale, from the liquids we drink, from the vegetables and animals on Thus probably a very small portion which we feed. of that matter, which went to constitute our bodies ten years ago, is now a constituent part of these organized frames. Yet what we call self still remains; and we consider ourselves, as the same persons, amidst all this fluctuation and material change. If, then, the body of a man may be gradually changed, while his personality or conscious being remains identically the same; why may not the whole body be taken away at once by death, and still this self, this conscious being continue in existence, undisturbed and unchanged?

Nor can any objection of materialists diminish the force of this consideration. Should they affirm, that personal, or mental identity depends not on the existence of anything spiritual in man, but simply on the continuance of the same organization of the body; our answer would be, that this organization may be disturbed and portions of it entirely destroyed, without any diminution of the powers and energies of the mind; or on the other hand, all the phenomena of mind may be concealed from our view, without any change or diminution of bodily organization; a leg, an arm, indeed, any part of this organized frame, which is not essential to animal life, and therefore to constitute the connecting link between soul and body, may be taken away without injury to the mental faculties.

Should they plunge even deeper into the dark recesses of human ignorance, and rest their objection on a foundation entirely unseen, and altogether beyond the reach of observation in the living subject; should they make the existence of the conscious being depend

solely on the organization of the brain; our answer would be as broad, and as deep as the objection, and certainly not more presumptuous; we should say, that death may be produced without any apparent derangement of this organization. The truth is, (as far as we can observe, and as far as we are authorized to make any statement on the subject,) that this organization is necessary for the manifestation of the intellectual powers and operations to the senses. But this by no means proves or implies, that it is necessary to the existence, or to the most perfect operations of the reflective powers of the mind.

Should they, however, still pursue this strain of objections, founded on ignorance; and ask what idea we can form of spirit distinct from matter, of a mind without an organized frame, of a soul without a body; our answer would be prompt and obvious; and, to every one, accustomed to the process of analytical investigation, it must be satisfactory. We should say, that our ideas of material and immaterial substance, of matter and spirit, of soul and body, are equally clear, and acquired in precisely the same manner, by observation external and internal, by sensation and reflection. Both are known to us by their properties only. By sensation we discover the properties of matter, and hence conclude, that there must be some substratum, in which they coëxist. By reflection we discern the properties of spirit; and hence infer, that there must be some spiritual being, in which they are united. The ideas of matter and of mind, therefore, are implied ideas, necessary ideas; or, as Cousin would say, logical ideas. They arise spontaneously, as we take notice of the combined properties of each, and feel the necessity of some combining influence, some nexus to hold them together. The propositions, then, which affirm their existence

are equally certain. They are both intuitive propositions, first truths, which need no proof; which indeed are so certain, that they cannot be proved. They are believed, alike, "immediately, universally, irresistibly." They are *felt* to be true, equally true, and even by those who affect to doubt; and who, under a sort of hallucination, or through a reckless habit of perverting language, deny their truth.

Let me ask your attention to a brief illustration of this statement: I have in my hand a portion of that substance, which we call matter. This book is matter or material substance. If now, you ask, what this matter is; I can only answer, something, which is solid and extended; something, which resists pressure, and occupies space. If then you ask, what that something is, which is thus solid and extended, I can only answer, in a circle, something, which contains or exhibits or combines these properties of solidity and extension; or confess my ignorance at once, with the Indian philosopher, who had sought in vain for something to support his tortoise, which supported the elephant, on which the earth rested; and say with him, "something, I know not what." Thus concerning the nature of matter, or the real essence of material substance, we can give no account, nor form any abstract and positive conception; and yet we can have no doubt of its existence. The result of an inquiry into the nature of spirit, or immaterial substance, would be precisely the same. Let any one reflect on the operations of his own mind. He will immediately discover, that there is something, which thinks, remembers, wills, and directs the movements of his body. What this something is, abstracted from these properties, he does not, indeed, know. But of its properties, united and permanently combined, he has clear and distinct ideas;

and of the existence of the mind itself he has, and can have, no doubts.

Thus this objection of materialists operates as forcibly against the existence of matter, as of spirit; but our acquaintance with the properties of both, destroys the whole force of its operation. Something, in which these respective classes of properties meet, and on which they depend, certainly does exist. Something surely exists, which thinks and wills; and something, which is solid and extended. The one we discover by sensation and perception, the other by consciousness and reflection. The one we denominate matter, the other spirit. The one is material, the other immaterial; and our knowledge and ignorance of both are bounded by the same lines.

If now, with this view of the different natures, or rather of the different properties, of the soul and body, we consider the effects of death, so far as they fall within our observation, the common objections against the immortality of the soul will immediately vanish. tendency of death is not to destroy, but to change. it the matter, which constitutes an organized body, is modified, but not annihilated; the parts are separated, but not destroyed; the whole frame is dissolved and crumbled into dust but the substance still remains. Now analogy would teach us, if death has any direct influence on the soul, to expect the same effect, as on the body. But the total difference in the nature and properties of matter and mind, forbids the expectation; and cuts off all conclusions from analogy. For, if according to all our notions, derived from consciousness, the soul is a simple, uncompounded substance, it is not subject to dissolution, cannot be separated into parts; and the supposed analogy fails entirely. may, indeed, be true, that the same Almighty Power,

who called us into being, can speak us back into nothing; that he who created, can destroy the human soul. But, I say, there is nothing in the tendency of death, so far as we can trace it, which would lead us to suppose, that this effect is actually produced. As we see nothing destroyed by death, the most natural and probable conclusion is, that there is no absolute destruction, either of matter or mind, connected with it; that it annihilates neither material nor immaterial substance; that when "the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved," the soul or intellectual part of man is sent, unembodied, into the world of spirits.

Thus far our argument is merely negative. It is designed only to prove, that death has no necessary connection with the destruction of the soul, and furnishes no analogy indicative of such destruction. It tends merely to remove objections against immortality, and dissipate the influence of early prejudices and first impressions. Let us now proceed on positive ground; and attend to the considerations, which reason suggests in favor of our actual existence beyond the grave.

The progressive nature of the human mind raises, at least, a slight presumption of its immortality. Man is, or may be, constantly in a course of moral and intellectual discipline; enlarging his experience, establishing his principles and even increasing his knowledge, from the cradle to the grave.\* He comes into the world perfectly ignorant. Opening his eyes on the objects around, he perceives and learns. Every day acquaints him with something new; and every acqui-

<sup>\*</sup> The apparent exceptions to this statement, which arise from a view of the phenomena of old age and diseases of the brain, are easily and fully accounted for by the simple and natural supposition, that in these cases the connection between the body and mind is weakened or deranged, while the powers of the mind, as in the case of sleep, remain unimpaired.

sition in knowledge, opens before him a new field of inquiry, and at the same time enlarges his powers of acquisition. At his birth, his intellect is nothing but a capacity, a power to contain. It is a blank book, in which are to be recorded the occurrences of life and the results of experience and investigation. But it is a book, whose pages are never full. It expands with time; it grows with its contents; it increases with the events and discoveries and maxims recorded. this respect, man differs essentially from the rest of the animal creation. Beasts and birds are brought into existence with powers greatly superior to the helpless babe. In a short time they reach the summit of their improvement. Their Creator, by giving them at once all the knowledge and skill which are necessary to answer the end of their existence, leaves them nothing to learn. Beasts know, without a teacher, the most healthful and nutritive food: and birds the climate most congenial to their several natures. study or instruction, they are practical navigators, mechanics, physicians and philosophers. Instinct in them is permanent; but reason in man is progressive. Hence they appear to be formed for time, but he for eternity. They seem to reach the perfection of their nature, and answer the end of their being in the present state. But this life seems to be only the dawn of man's existence. He just begins to learn; he has just acquired the use of reason; his desire of knowledge has just become vigorous and active, when death cuts short his earthly career, calls him from the stage of life and closes the scene below.

My hearers, have we not here presumptive evidence of the immortality of the soul? Has our Creator, without design, distinguished us from the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air? Is it in vain, that

we are made capable of endless improvement? Shall we, after all, lie down in everlasting silence, with the beasts that perish? In a word, is not the wisdom of God a pledge of immortality to man?

The general expectation, which everywhere prevails, furnishes another argument, at least affords an intimation of the reality of a future state. For, if in this life only men have hope, they are of all creatures most miserable. The brutes enjoy the present, unconcerned about the future. They have nothing of that anxious solicitude for their future welfare, nor of that fearful looking for of judgment, which reflecting men experience. Why, then, has the wise and benevolent Author of all our hopes and fears, given to his rational creatures this expectation, if it has no foundation in truth, no real object, no tendency to secure a wise end and prepare for a benevolent and happy result?

Similar to this consideration is that of an almost universal desire of continued existence. A sober mind can scarcely, for a moment, support the idea of annihilation. The very thought of sinking into nothing fills the mind with horror. Nor is the supposition admissible, that a wise and benevolent Creator would have implanted in man this universal desire, if the object of it were not real. This whole argument of ancient philosophy has been beautifully expressed in modern poetry:

Plato, thou reasonest well!—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into nought? why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction.
"Tis the Divinity that stirs within us;
."Tis Heaven itself, that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.

The strongest argument, however, for the immortali-

ty of the soul, which unassisted reason furnishes, is founded on the justice of God, viewed in connection with his providential government. From a careful view of this government, it appears evident, that a moral scheme is begun, but not completed in this life. Men are moral agents. They are capable of perceiving the eternal difference between right and wrong. They readily discover their obligations to pursue the good and avoid the evil. They feel themselves accountable for their conduct. But, in the present state, they are not called to account; nor do they here receive according to their deeds. For although the natural tendency of virtue is to produce happiness, and of vice to entail misery; yet, in the present state of existence, various causes conspire to oppose this natural tendency, and prevent the virtuous and vicious from receiving their respective rewards. Sentence against an evil work is seldom, if ever and in full measure, executed speedily; nor is the fruit of a good work often, if at all, perfectly ripened and brought to maturity in this world. The most superficial observation must convince us. that the enjoyments and sufferings of mankind, in the present life, however much the former may preponderate in favor of the righteous, are by no means in exact accordance with moral and religious character. How often are the natural tendencies of virtue and vice interrupted and perverted! How often do the happy effects of the former fall on the wicked; while the evil consequences of the latter involve the innocent in suffering, and even temporal ruin! How often do we see, what the Psalmist saw, "the ungodly, who prosper in the world; who increase in riches. Though they set their mouth against the heavens, and speak loftily with their tongues; though pride compasseth them about as a chain, and violence covereth them as

a garment, yet are they not in trouble, as other men. neither are they plagued like other men. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish!" How often do we thus behold the proud, impious and cruel, faring sumptuously every day; while some meek and pious Lazarus lies at the gate. covered with disease, and perishing with hunger! Wicked men, by avoiding reflection and diving into dissipation, frequently and sometimes through life, silence those reproaches of natural conscience, which else would "harrow up their guilty souls." A vigorous constitution sometimes secures to the intemperate as long a life, and as much health as the regular and temperate man enjoys. Injustice, fraud, violence and cruelty choose for their victims the weak, the innocent and defenceless; while faithfulness and charity extend their favors even to those, "who never felt for other's woe."

In the natural events of the world, all things come alike to all. There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked. The sun shines with as much splendor, the air breathes with as much purity, the rain descends in as great abundance on the evil. as on the good. National blessings and national calamities fall equally, or at least promiscuously, on the sinner and the saint: on the individual members of the community, of whatever character. If there be ten righteous men in a city, and the Lord spare it for ten's sake, all enjoy this fruit of their righteousness. If war, famine and pestilence visit a people, they seize upon those, who first cross their path, and select their victims without distinction of character. They respect neither age nor sex, nor innocence nor guilt. With indiscriminate and relentless impartiality, they sweep away the wicked and the good together. As dieth the wise man,

so dieth the fool; they lie down alike in the dust, and the worm doth cover them.—But if a man die, shall he live again? Yea; shall he not live in a state, where all this apparent imperfection will cease; in a world, where virtue and vice, sin and holiness, will produce their natural consequences without interruption; where the tendency of the one and of the other will have room for action, and time to result in unmixed and permanent effect: where the wickedness of the wicked will be upon him, and upon him alone; and the righteousness of the righteous upon him, and upon him alone; where, in a word, each one's happiness or misery will be in exact correspondence with his real character? If God now reigns on the earth, will he not hereafter judge in the heavens? If he has here begun a scheme of moral government, will he not complete it there? If he has made man accountable, will be not call him to account? In a word, if God is just, is not man immortal?

Thus have we endeavored to prove from the different natures, or rather from the different properties, of the soul and body, that the dissolution of the one does not involve the destruction of the other. was simply intended to remove objections against the immortality of the soul, and thus prepare the mind for positive arguments. Proceeding on this ground, we have reasoned for the reality of a future state, from the progressive nature of the human mind, from the general desire and expectation of mankind, and finally from the justice of God, viewed in connection with the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in These considerations. the present state of existence. taken together, afford at least a probability, a slight presumption, of the immortality of the soul. Still, however, the evidence is only probable; and by no

means conclusive. Though it appears sufficient to produce conviction in the mind of every thorough inquirer after truth; and, in connection with the scattered rays and reflected light of traditional revelation. has actually raised a general expectation among all nations of the earth, and in all ages of the world: vet the inability of some and the negligence of others have, everywhere and in all ages, prevented this evidence alone from producing a universal, steady and practical And even to those, whose speculations resulted in belief, where the light of the Christian revelation had never shone, the subject still appeared enveloped in "shadows, clouds and darkness," considerations induced many of the philosophers of antiquity to express the hope, that the wise Creator and Governor of the world, would in due time grant the human race a complete revelation of his will. perceived the necessity of what some modern deists have accounted useless. They perceived, that men would wander in darkness and perish in their wanderings, without a light sent from heaven to guide them. Hence they earnestly desired, that some supernatural means might be employed, to remove all doubts from the subject of immortality; to convince mankind, that they were living and forming characters for eternity: to teach them fully and clearly the will and pleasure of their Maker. Glory to God in the highest! such means have been used. A complete revelation of the divine will has been given to man. We now see what prophets and kings and philosophers "desired to see, but were not permitted." We now need to entertain no fears of annihilation, nor any doubts concerning futurity. For life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel. The dayspring from on high has visited the earth. The Sun of righteousness has risen, and illumed the dark valley of the shadow of death. Jesus has burst the bars of death, risen triumphant from the grave, led captivity captive, and taught us, that as he rose, "so all his followers will." The word of God assures us, that though a man die, he shall live again; that there shall be a resurrection, both of the just and of the unjust; that the trumpet shall sound and the dead rise, and this mortal put on immortality.

I purposely avoid here all speculations on the mode and time of the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment of the world. I make no allusion to any of the various human theories and conjectures on these subjects. Indeed, I consider all these theories as not only unnecessary, but presumptuous; going "beyond what is written," involving the whole subject in darkness, and leading the speculating mind into a state of perplexity, if not into fatal error and absolute infidelity. Enough is revealed to show us, that we "shall live again;" shall exist beyond the grave, the same conscious beings; shall remain susceptible of happiness and misery; shall be judged according to our works, and dwell forever in a state of just retribution; enough, therefore, to furnish the highest motive to holy action, and open to the believer an inexhaustible source of consolation and hope.

Our subject naturally suggests many practical remarks and consoling reflections. With a few of these I shall close the discourse.

I remark, in the first place, that it must be a source of consolation to us, when pious and virtuous friends are taken from us and put into darkness, to remember that death is not the end of man; that, when he dieth and wasteth away, his nobler part still survives; that when the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit returns to God, who gave it. This is a reflection, which

must soften the pang of separation among pious friends, and sweeten the cup of sorrow in the hand of faith. Happy; yea, happy indeed are they who with an eye of faith can see their departed friends still in existence; and, with pleasing hope, anticipate the time when they shall meet them in the regions of immortal bliss. To such we may address the language of an inspired apostle: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as those who have no hope. For if ye believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.—Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

I remark, secondly, that our subject, as we have been led to view it, teaches us to remember with gratitude the goodness of God, in sending his Son into the world, to redeem the world; to bring life and immortality to light; to open a door of reconciliation for sinners, and grant us a sure hope of pardon and salvation through faith and repentance. For, if we are in any measure free from the fear of death, the dread of annihilation and the overwhelming apprehensions of a judgment to come, we are indebted, for this freedom from spiritual bondage, to him who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification:

These lively hopes we owe To Jesus' dying love.

Nothing, indeed, but death itself can entirely destroy the fear of dying. The inward dread is instinctive; and was wisely implanted in our nature. Even those, who have learned to consider death as a mere change from one state of being to another, and have such evidence of their pardon and reconciliation to God, as to feel a strong confidence that it will be to them a blessed and glorious change, still dread the agonizing shock, which must separate the mortal from the immortal part. The apostle Paul himself, while he desired to be absent from the body, that he might be present with the Lord, yet felt a reluctance to pass through "the dark valley of the shadow of death." He wished not to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. If, then, the good man, the firm believer, has some remaining fears of death; with what feelings must the unhappy sceptic, (if he is not hardened and stupified beyond the reach of sober reflections,) with what feelings must he behold the approach of the king of terrors! When his dissolution draweth nigh, what must be the language of his doubting, trembling heart! A master painter of human nature has furnished an answer to this inquiry, giving us the words of one supposed to possess this character and to be in this condition. They are these:

Ay! but to die and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;
This sensible, warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
To bathe in flery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick ribbed ice;
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
Of those, that lawless and uncertain thoughts
Imagine howling;—'Tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
That age, sche, penury and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.

Nothing but madness; nothing but wild dissipation of thought can support the dying infidel, or preserve him from these painful and overwhelming apprehensions. But the doctrine under consideration, when firmly believed and duly regarded, disarms death of

more than half his terrors; and presents him, though an enemy still, yet the *last* enemy, and about to be destroyed. The Christian's hope is an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, even in the moment of dissolution. He can lean on the supporting arm of his Redeemer, and wait patiently till his change come. Though his heart and his flesh faileth; yet God is the strength of his heart and his portion forever.

Let it be remembered, however, that this hope, this serenity of mind, this unfailing support in a dying hour, is the portion of those only whose faith works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world. The hope of the hypocrite will be cut off and perish; and his trust and support will become as the spider's web.

I remark, thirdly and finally, that our subject shows us the importance of a living faith, controlling the affections of the heart and producing a virtuous and holy life. Before we can die in peace, we must repent of our sins; before we can participate in the joys of a blessed immortality, we must be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and thus be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; before we can die the death of the righteous and have our last end like his, we must imbibe his pious and benevolent spirit and live his life of holy obedience. For the same arguments from analogy, which favor the idea of a future state, suggest likewise the idea of a future retribution: and the same inspired word which removes all doubt from the former, fully establishes "After death cometh the judgthe latter doctrine. ment." We are taught by inspiration, not only that the spirit shall return to God, who gave it; but that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to the deeds done in the body.

Often, my hearers, should we meditate on this subject, and draw from it the practical lessons and rich consolation which it furnishes. Especially, when friends and those with whom we have been associated in life, are called from this scene of toil and discipline to their reward, should we bend our minds to the task, and lay the whole subject to heart. The members of the House of Representatives present, will permit me. therefore, to press upon their minds the application of the subject in connection with the solemn admonitions of Providence in the recent deaths of three of their number. While the subject brings consolation under the afflictive events; the subject and the events connected, speak the language of admonition. They remind you, at once, that life is short and uncertain; and yet, that you are living and acting for eternity. They seem to say: "be ye also ready;" "what you do for yourselves and for your country, you must do quickly."

Finally, let us all remember, that we are at once mortal and immortal beings; that we must die, but shall live again; that we are living in time, but forming characters for eternity. This is a reflection which we should often make, when we go out and when we come in, that it may become habitual, and settle into a practical principle; that it may be in our bosoms, like the sword of Paradise, turning every way, and guarding the soul against the incursions of sin; that it may, like the pillar of *fire* and *cloud* in the wilderness, guide us by night and by day, till we pass through the stream of Jordan, and reach the heavenly Canaan.

## LECTURE II.

THE SCRIPTURES THE ONLY SURE GUIDE OF LIFE.

#### 2 TIMOTHY III. 16, 17.

ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY IMPRICATION OF GOD; AND IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUS-NESS; THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE PERFECT, THOROUGHLY FURNISHED BUTTO ALL GOOD WORKS.\*

What is truth; and what is duty? For what were we made; what is our destination; and where shall we find a guide, a safe and perfect guide in life? These, and questions like these, have been often asked; and not unfrequently have they become questions of bewildering controversy and overwhelming solicitude. Whole communities have sometimes been agitated by them; and even now, in Christian countries, and with the Bible in their hands, thousands leave them undecided, and remain involved in darkness, perplexed with doubts, and sunk in stupidity or despair.

But, if the declaration in our text may be relied on, it is surely no longer necessary for men to wander from the path of duty, or fail of finding the way of life. They have a guide, a safe guide. They have a directory, a sure directory to happiness and heaven. They

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was prepared and first delivered in Middlebury, Vt.; revised and delivered at Washington; and subsequently enlarged and delivered, as two discourses, in Dudley and several other places.

have the Bible, which teaches them; and teaches them clearly and with authority, both what is truth and what is duty, what they need to know, and what they are required to do-all, that is necessary to render them wise unto salvation and conduct them to heaven. For saith our apostle: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This declaration, it is true, was originally made with reference exclusively to the Old Testament. But it is equally applicable to the New Testament. Indeed the proof of the inspiration of this portion of the Bible, independently of the mutual testimony which the two parts bear to each other, is altogether the clearest and most They must, however, stand or fall toconclusive. gether; and, we add, the foundation on which they stand is sure, never to be shaken, till the heavens be no more. We may, therefore, extend the declaration. in the text, to the whole Bible; and view the whole. In this discourse, however, I as the word of God. shall not attempt to prove and illustrate, at large, the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures; nor refer to it, except incidentally, and so far as it has a direct bearing on the subject brought to view in the latter part of the text—the design, use and sufficiency of the Scriptures. And in treating of this subject, and giving it a practical application, I shall pursue the following method:

In the *first place*, I shall endeavor to show, that the Scriptures are the only safe guide in life; and that they are both safe and sufficient, furnishing the means of our becoming acquainted with every truth and duty necessary to virtue, happiness and salvation; being "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness."

Secondly, I shall institute the inquiry, how they are to be used, that we may obtain this safe guidance, and by their influence "become perfect and thoroughly furnished to all good works."

First, then, I am to show that the Scriptures are a safe guide; and the only safe and sufficient guide in life. Other guides have, indeed, been proposed. But they are all imperfect and unsafe; always erroneous, and sometimes fatally delusive. A brief examination of those, which have been most frequently proposed, as a substitute for the Scriptures, will justify this remark, and fully establish the negative part of our first proposition.

1. The mere sensualist, the Epicurean would send us to our instinctive propensities for guidance, would have us vield to the influence of passive impressions. indulge the cravings of appetite, and follow the course which blind emotion and mere animal feelings prescribe. His argument, if argument it may be called, is simply this: "He that made us, gave us these propensities; and gave them to be indulged. to their promptings, therefore, is to follow nature; and to follow nature is to obey the God of nature. gence, then, is obedience: 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." This language, or language like this, thousands have uttered; and forgetting, that the design of passion and appetite is not to guide and direct rational and immortal beings, but merely to move and propel them to action, have lived, and justified their living, like the beasts that perish. And thousands besides, who have not sufficient ingenuity to give even a false reason for their conduct, have acted on the licentious maxim, to which this sophistical argument

leads; and reckless of consequences, in spite of the admonitions of experience and observation, of reason and conscience, disregarding the warning voice of friendship, and even the tears and entreaties of parental affection, have yielded to the impulse of passion and the allurements of appetite, and blindly rushed forward to certain and remediless ruin.

2. Others there are, who consider "conscience as the best casuist;" and view it as a safe and sufficient guide in life. They see and admit the absurdity of the reasoning, by which the sensualist attempts to justify the unrestrained indulgence of appetite and passion. They perceive, that these emotions, or rather these susceptibilities, which give rise to emotion, were designed, not to direct and govern, but to stimulate and propel to action, under the direction of some higher power, some safer guide. This, they think, they find in conscience, or what is sometimes denominated a moral sense. Being susceptible of pleasure or pain, in view of what they account morally good or evil, they hastily conclude, that this feeling of approbation and disapprobation, or rather the capacity thus to feel, constitutes the whole of their moral nature; and that it was designed to teach them the will of their Creator, to designate the path of duty and lead them in the way of life. "We need not stop to reason or reflect," say they, "in order to learn our duty. A monitor within points out the way for us and directs our steps. We need not look at consequences, nor consider the tendency of actions, to discover what is right and agreeable to the will of God. He has given us a full expression of his will by the 'inspirations of conscience;' by implanting in our bosoms a moral sense, a feeling of moral approbation and disapprobation, an instinctive sense of right and wrong, an unerring judge, who

always and immediately, before and after we act, pronounces a righteous sentence on all our actions." Thousands have said this, or something like this; and then confounding the inclination of a corrupt heart and the obstinacy of a perverse will with the dictates and promptings of conscience, have been drawn away by their own lusts and enticed, till they are finally led captive, at the will of Satan, to certain and everlasting destruction.

That there is in man such a thing as conscience or a moral sense, will not be denied. It is, as well as passion and appetite, a constituent part of human nature. Nor is its use more questionable, or its proper office less distinctly marked. Its office, however, has often been misapprehended; and the careless mistake has to multitudes proved fatal, and ended in their ruin. Conscience is not an instructor and guide, but merely a prompter and reprover. It was not designed to discover truth and teach us our duty. This is the office of another faculty of the mind. Conscience is blind, till enlightened by reason and revelation. It cannot of itself distinguish between right and wrong. only in subserviency to moral judgment, to established principles, to preconceived opinions, to rules of action. whether right or wrong, already settled in the mind. It is so far from being a safe and sufficient guide, that it is peculiarly liable to perversion. It may be modified by education, corrupted by licentious maxims, defiled by the influence of wicked example; and, by long indulgence in iniquity, even seared as with a hot iron. It cannot, therefore, be trusted alone. It cannot act. it cannot live alone. It depends, as we said, on our previously established views of truth and duty, for all its sanctions and efficient operations. You cannot, therefore, with any security, make it the guide of your

By it you can never learn the will of God, nor discover the moral relations, which he has constituted: and which, however discovered, are the foundation of all duty, as well as of all safe rules of moral action. Where our opinions are correct and our moral judgment sound, the approving or condemning sentence of conscience will, it is true, harmonize with the decisions But where our opinions are erroneous, of Heaven. or our judgment perverted by passion and prejudice, our feelings of approbation and disapprobation will follow these erroneous opinions and this perverted judgment; and they may come at last, when the understanding is thoroughly darkened and the heart completely hardened by sin, to be directly at variance with the will of God; and, like the persecuting Saul of Tarsus, we may follow the promptings of such a conscience, and verily think, that we are doing God's service, while we are opposing his cause and breathing out vengeance against his people! No; conscience, without the aid of reason and the instructions of revelation, never leads to duty and to happiness. It is, indeed, as we have already said, an essential principle of our moral nature; and its admonitions must be scrupulously regarded. But we must not confound its offices with those of reason. Much less should we allow it to usurp the prerogatives of revelation. Before it can be relied on, as a guide, it must be enlightened and purified. Unenlightened and unsanctified, it may perhaps, occasionally prompt and reproach; but it cannot guide in safety; it may sometimes speak, but its voice will be feeble and indistinct; its language will be equivocal, like the oracles of heathen mythology, or like the uncertain sound of the trumpet, by which no one is warned to prepare for battle.

3. Others pretend to make reason their guide; and

to view it as a safe guide; sufficient for all the purposes of life; adequate to the security of virtue and happiness. With us, they consider unenlightened conscience as a blind guide; and consequently discard the dangerous doctrine, which teaches submission to the mere impulse of feeling, whether resulting from an external or an internal sense. But closing their eyes against the light of revelation, they blindly follow, what they choose to call the dictates of reason. With them, philosophy is everything; and in their opinion it is sufficient to enlighten and reform the world, to discover the path of duty and lead man to happiness. Reason, if we use the term in its most enlarged sense, as denoting that faculty by which relations between things compared, are discovered, first principles, intuitively perceived and remote truths, deduced and established; reason, if we thus employ the term, has indeed its proper place in the investigation of religious truth and duty; and without it revelation itself would be unintelligible and useless. Still, however, it is altogether insufficient to guide us, with safety, through the mazes of life. Though capable of discovering many moral truths; enough, indeed, to render the heathen inexcusable for their idolatry and gross wickedness; yet biased as it is by the depravity of the heart, it rarely finds out and maintains even these doctrines of natural religion. Unaided by revelation, it would never lead us to a knowledge of the divine will concerning the great doctrines of grace, on which our duty, our destination and our happiness depend. Its range is circumscribed within a narrow space and confined to a short period of time. It is tied down to the earth, and restrained within the limits of the present life. cannot advance a step beyond the grave. It leaves all fiturity involved in darkness. From it eternity, with all its interesting scenes and animating hopes, is concealed by an impenetrable veil. Concerning the life to come, and the necessary preparations for happiness in that life, the conditions of pardon and the terms of salvation, it can give us no satisfactory information. On these subjects and subjects like these, it may, indeed, form conjectures and suggest the dreams of imagination. But they will be mere dreams, vain imaginations, unprofitable conjectures. Doubt and uncertainty will rest upon them, destroying all the consolation of hope, and leaving nothing of the energy of holy principle.

Without the aid of revelation, what can reason do? What has it done, to purify and elevate the character of man? The experiment has been made and the re-The history of the world illustrates sult is known. and confirms the declaration of an inspired apostle: "The world by wisdom knew not God." However consistent with reason the doctrines of the gospel may appear to us who have known the Holy Scriptures from our childhood: reason never would have discovered them; certainly never would have embraced them with that cordiality which gives them all their practical efficacy. The history of ancient philosophy and modern infidelity fully establishes this position, and proves conclusively the insufficiency of unassisted reason, to lead men into religious truth, and enforce upon them the claims of duty. This short-sighted guide, where the light of revelation has not shone upon her paths, has always become bewildered, and has led astray those who have pretended exclusively and implicitly to follow her steps. She has led some to atheism, some to polytheism, some to pantheism and all to error, darkness and bewildering scepticism. Let me not be misunderstood. I would not undervalue the gift of reason. It is one of Heaven's best gifts to man. Nor would I deny its importance, and even necessity, in the investigation of religious truths: those truths on which duty and happiness chiefly depend. It is no less a constituent part of our nature than passion and appetite and conscience. Like them. too, it has its appropriate office; and this office is equally obvious and necessary. Without reason, we could neither discover the path of duty, nor understand those doctrines which furnish motives to holy obedience: which awaken conscience and move the heart. Christianity does not disclaim its authority, nor reject its agency. On the contrary, she addresses men as rational beings; and calls upon them to consider, to deliberate and judge, before they yield to feeling, or allow themselves to act; and finally, to act in accordance with their best judgment, and under the influence of enlightened and sanctified feeling. Indeed, true religion and sober reason can never be at variance with each other. Proceeding from the same perfect Being, they can never, till the one or the other is perverted, counteract each other's influence. Christianity even demands the highest and purest exercise of the intellectual powers; and the homage of the heart, which she claims, is sanctioned by the soundest maxims of philosophy. It is "science falsely so called," or superficial philosophy, or reason perverted by a corrupt heart and a perverse will; it is this, my hearers. which, inflated by vanity and pride, arrays itself against the gospel, and holds the doctrines and the disciples of Christ in contempt. But sound philosophy, well established science, sober and cultivated reason, is a friend and companion of pure and undefiled religion, of that "wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Still, as was said before, the most cultivated intellect, the most unbiased reason, must fail to guide the bewildered soul in its pilgrimage through this world, in its journey to heaven, in its preparations for that state which lies beyond the field of observation, into which philosophy cannot penetrate, and concerning which it can, by its highest efforts, make no discovery. Especially is this true, with regard to the great doctrines of grace, and the duties and hopes which flow from this wonderful scheme of redeeming mercy. We come, therefore, to the positive part of our principal proposition, and remark,

4. That the Scriptures constitute a safe guide in life, furnish the means of our becoming acquainted with every truth and duty necessary to human happiness; are therefore "profitable for correction and instruction in righteousness," able to make all who imbibe their spirit and follow their directions, wise unto salvation and "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"To the law and to the testimony," therefore we must repair, if we would find a perfect standard of truth and duty. The Bible, and the Bible alone, can teach us what we most need to know, and what we must do to be saved. In all the mazes of metaphysical inquiry, in all the subtilties of moral distinction, in all the controversies concerning duty and destiny, "This is the judge that ends the strife."

The Scriptures furnish a safe and perfect guide in life, because they were given by the inspiration of God, and were given for the express purpose of making known to man the will of God.

Yes, as stated at the commencement of the discourse, the declaration in the first clause of the text may be applied to the whole Bible. And though we did not feel ourselves called upon to appropriate a distinct head of discourse to the discussion of the subject of inspiration; yet we may remark here, incidentally, and with direct reference to the leading subject of discourse, that it would not be difficult to justify this extended application, and prove, conclusively, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, both of the Old Testament and the New; and show that they were written by holy men, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: by men so enlightened, prompted and directed, that we may rely on their testimony and instructions with implicit confidence. We might show, I think, to the doubting but sincere inquirer, that the writers of the New Testament supported their claims to inspiration by the consistency and harmony of their instructions, by their holy lives and conversation, and especially by the exercise of miraculous gifts; that they all participated in the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit, promised by the Saviour, when he said to his disciples: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." We might show that this promise of supernatural light and directing influence over the human memory and judgment, in furnishing instruction for the church and the world, extended not only to the first-appointed apostles of our Lord, and the apostolic men, who were their companions, such as Mark and Luke, but to the apostle Paul, who, though born into the kingdom and called to the apostleship of Christ, "out of due time," nevertheless substantiated his claims to inspiration, and showed that he was "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles," in all apostolical gifts. Hence we might proceed to establish the inspiration and divine authority of the Old Testament, by the testimony of the writers of the New; since most of the books of that Testament are directly quoted as the word of God, by these writers. Especially might we establish this point by a just interpretation of the first clause of our text; since it would be easy to show that the inspired apostle must have had reference, in this declaration, to the Old Testament, to the whole of that Testament, to all the books of that Testament, as then canonized and used in Judea.\*

Thus might we establish the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures; and thus may we rely on their instructions with implicit confidence. We are authorized, therefore, to conclude that the Scriptures are a safe guide in life. And the instructions which they furnish are so comprehensive and complete, as to render them a sufficient guide; sufficient to lead those who follow their guidance, "into all truth," and to conduct them, in the path of duty, to the rest of heaven.

They do not, it must be admitted, teach us all that a vain curiosity may desire to know; nor all, that impious presumption sometimes demands. But they do teach us, whatever is necessary, to show us our relations, and the duties which grow out of these relations; whatever is calculated to sustain us under trials, and move us to holy action; whatever we need to know, in order to become wise unto salvation, or to do, that we may be saved. And all this they teach us, in a

<sup>\*</sup> I am aware of the fact, that some have attempted to avoid this broad conclusion, by varying the translation, and even the original text, of this passage of Scripture. But after the most careful examination, I am compelled to believe, that their criticism is a mere gloss, unsupported by manuscript evidence, and inconsistent with the idiom of the Greek language.

manner best adapted to the various capacities and conditions of all men, in all ages and under all circumstances.

They do not, indeed, supersede the necessity of patient inquiry and active exertion, and thus render our natural and moral powers and susceptibilities useless. They describe the human race, as they are; appeal to them, as possessing feeling and conscience and reason; and take advantage of these powers and susceptibilities, to bring them back from sin to holiness, to virtue, to happiness, to God.

They do not, it must likewise be admitted, furnish a distinct precept for every supposable case of duty, for that would be impracticable; and, since men are endued with reason and judgment, it would be unnecessary, even if it were practicable. But they give general directions, modified by various circumstances, illustrated by various examples, exhibited in answer to various inquiries, and stated in various forms and connections, so as to reach the capacities and meet the exigencies of every honest mind. Thus they mark out the path of duty so plainly, that the wayfaring man, though a fool in human estimation, if honest in the sight of God, cannot err therein. So likewise they furnish the highest sanctions, to enforce their injunctions; and, by their sublime and benevolent doctrines, they lay before the mind the most powerful motives, to move and to melt the heart; to subdue the rebellious spirit, to purify the corrupt affections, to elevate the debased soul, and render the whole man holy, in all manner of conversation and godliness.

### SECOND PART.

Having shown, that the Scriptures furnish the only perfect rules for the guidance of human life, we are naturally brought to the second general head of discourse, and led, as was proposed, to institute the inquiry, how the Scriptures are to be used, that we may obtain this safe guidance from them, and by their influence become "perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

This, my hearers, is indeed an important inquiry. For the existence and perfection of the Scriptures, and even a general knowledge and acknowledgement of their truth and authority, will not profit us, if we neglect or pervert them. Carelessness, inconsideration, and heedless inattention to the means of grace, are as fatal to character and happiness, as the grossest ignorance. Nay more: such abuse of privileges aggravates transgression, enhances guilt, and will increase the weight of final condemnation. "This," said he, who knows upon what principles the judgment of the world will proceed, "this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light." And an inspired apostle uttered the same sentiment, when he said: "We are a savor of life unto life to them that believe; but of death unto death to them that perish." The Scriptures, however full of instruction, and however wisely and wonderfully adapted to the capacities and exigencies of all mankind, will still fail to guide, sanctify and save those, who wilfully pervert, or carelessly neglect them.

In particular, I remark first, that in order to render the Scriptures profitable, and by them to become perfect, we must read them, often read them, and with great care and undivided attention. "Search the Scriptures," said our Saviour to the Jews, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they, that testify of me." The Bereans were accounted more noble, than those who heard the apostle, at Thessalonica, in that they not only heard him preach with all readiness of mind, but daily searched the Scriptures, to see whether the things, taught by him, were so. We are, indeed, directed, and again and again urged, by the inspired writers, to study the word of God with all meekness and diligence, to read therein by day and meditate thereon by night; to take heed to the sure word of prophecy, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts.

The holy Scriptures must be read, must be searched by us, or what our Saviour said to the Sadducees, will be true in application to us: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God." We shall certainly fall into error and wander from the path of life. if we fail to obtain a knowledge of the Scriptures; and we shall certainly fail of obtaining this knowledge, unless we search them with diligence, with attention, with perseverance. That careless state of mind. that indifference to the truth, that listless inattention to the word of God, whether read or preached, which pervades so large a portion of the community, is an alarming symptom of spiritual death. Neither the reading, nor the preaching of the word can profit a man, till this moral lethargy is removed. The mind must be roused. and the heart touched; anxiety must be excited, interest must be awakened, and attention must be devoted to the oracles of God, before we can be essentially benefitted by them. But mere attention is not enough to give efficacy to the word of God.

Secondly, therefore, I remark, that the Scriptures, if their instructions are to be understood, their power felt, and their spirit imbibed, must be read with confidence in their decisions and submission to their authority: in the exercise of implicit faith and profound humility. The Lord has said: "A haughty spirit do I hate, but the meek will I teach my way." He that leaneth to his own understanding is, by the wisest of men, and with evident propriety, denominated "a fool." For, from the very nature of the great doctrines of revelation, unassisted reason cannot comprehend them; and he, who thus relies on its powers, must remain ignorant of those things, which belong to his everlasting peace. Before we can be made wise unto salvation. we must open the Bible, with minds prepared to receive every doctrine there recorded, and to regard every requisition there made. We must come to it, indeed, with all the simplicity and docility of a little child. The mystery of a doctrine must not, for a moment, be permitted to operate as an objection against it. must remember, that the ways of God are not as our ways, nor his thoughts like our thoughts; that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts higher than our thoughts, and his ways higher than our ways. We must not forget, that such knowledge as relates to the divine existence, counsels, and operations. is too high for us to reach; too deep for us to fathom; it is beyond the field of our observation; "past our finding out." What, therefore, God has declared, we ·must believe, without gainsaying or a single doubt; what he has commanded, we must do, without hesitation and without a murmur.

The office, and the whole office, of reason, in matters pertaining to divine revelation is, first, to examine the proof of the revelation itself; and, secondly, to ascertain its true meaning and apply its instructions to the practical purposes of life. To suffer reason to proceed a step beyond this point, is to destroy the use, and defeat all the purposes of revelation. It is more; it is impious presumption; it is to deify reason and set up human judgment in the place of divine wisdom. "Give me a Bible," said one; "give me a Bible. Convince me that it is the word of God. Let me find in it a doctrine plainly taught, and I ask no more. I embrace it, and I embrace it with all my heart. Whether it is a doctrine which reason might have discovered, or whether it relates to something altogether beyond the limits of human observation; whether the wisdom and benevolence of it can be fully comprehended by a finite understanding, or whether it involves a mystery which nothing but an omniscient eye can penetrate, and nothing but an infinite mind can unfold, is a matter of no importance in the decision. It is enough for me, it is enough for every humble and submissive spirit, that it is a doctrine of revelation: that it was given by the inspiration of God, that it was spoken and written by holy men, as they were moved by the Holv Ghost.

Without this teachable disposition in us, my hearers, without this submission to the authority of the Scriptures, of what practical use can they be to us? What can it avail, to read the Bible, even with a critic's eye, if, after all, we refuse to submit to its decisions; if it must be made to bend to our reason, blinded as our reason often is by passion and appetite; to our judgment, warped as our judgment sometimes is by prejudice; to our understandings, darkened as our understandings always are by the depravity of our hearts? If man, if every man for himself, must try the ways of God by his own ways, and the thoughts of God by

his own thoughts; must sit in judgment on the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, the Bible may as well be neglected as read. For it will fail to instruct and guide those who thus read; it can never thus render the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Thirdly, I remark, and the remark is closely connected with the observations just made, that kabitual obedience to the known will of God, as well as a temper of submission to divine authority, is necessary to a profitable reading of the Scriptures and a full development of their spiritual meaning. "If any man." said our Saviour, "will do the will of my Father, he shall know of my doctrine." In order to learn the truth, we must be willing to obey the truth. If we would know the will of God, we must be prepared to do his will as fast as it is discovered. Indeed, religious knowledge is peculiarly practical and experimental. In all branches of knowledge, practice and experience are necessary to render science definite and useful. Theory, however correct and perfect, will accomplish nothing, is of no value, without practical skill. This remark is substantially true in relation to all the pursuits of life. But, as I said before, it is peculiarly applicable to the subject of religion. Without religious experience and practice, there may, indeed, be speculation, conjecture, opinion; but there can be no such thing as definite religious knowledge or established saving faith. Men of corrupt hearts and unholy lives, sometimes talk about religion and duty; but they do not draw their religious sentiments, nor obtain their views of duty from the Bible. They understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. Take heed, therefore, whom you hear as well as how and what you hear; for "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse.

deceiving and being deceived." Listen not, I beseech you—I here speak especially to the young and inexperienced—listen not to the comments of the profane, the intemperate, the careless and hardened transgressor. Turn a deaf ear to those who talk and dispute about religion, while their habitual deportment shows, that they have never felt its power nor drunk in its spirit. "Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." "Walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful."

I remark, fourthly, that those who would find the Scriptures profitable, gain a full understanding of them and obtain from them all the instruction which they need, must not only read them, and in the manner and with the spirit already prescribed; but they must use all the helps which God in his providence has furnished and placed within their reach. As they have opportunity, they should avail themselves of the labors of pious and learned men, who have devoted their lives to the study of the languages in which the Scriptures were originally written, and of the history and literature of the people among whom they were first published. Much assistance may indeed be obtained, by occasionally consulting almost any of those popular commentaries, which abound in our age and country. But none of these helps can supply the place of the living expositor, or supersede the necessity of attending statedly on the preaching of the gospel. This is, indeed, the most important and indispensable help which God, in the economy of redemption, has provided for us, and expressly directed us to use, in order to render the instructions of the Scriptures interesting, impressive and effectual to salvation. For this purpose he has instituted the ministry of reconciliation:

and commissioned those whom he accounts worthy and puts into the ministry, to preach the gospel to every creature. With a view to the same end, he has set apart and consecrated a portion of time for public worship and its connected duties, a day of holy convocation and religious instruction; and has commanded us with an authority not to be questioned, and in language of universal application, to "remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy;" and "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." There is something in the tones of the human voice and the expressions of the human countenance, which, connected with the example of a good minister of Jesus Christ, and the mutual affection, growing out of the pastoral relation, together with the sympathies and solemnities of a public assembly in the house of God-there is something in all this, which is calculated to arrest attention, touch the heart and give peculiar efficacy to the word preached. stated attendance on public worship and the preaching of the gospel, in connection with the daily reading of the Scriptures, is found to be indispensable to secure the end for which the will of God has been revealed to man. However unnecessary and inadequate the means may appear to some, who are wise in their own conceit, it will be found that those who neglect the ordinances of public worship and the instructions of the sanctuary, will neither enjoy the consolation, feel the power, nor exhibit the spirit of the gospel; will not become wise to do good, wise unto salvation. Knowledge, learning, cultivated intellect even, furnishes no ground of exception to this remark. It is not true, as Dr. Paley has hastily admitted, that men of enlarged and cultivated minds do not need the exercises of public worship on their own account; and are

bound to attend, merely for the sake of furnishing an example for the benefit of others. No, my hearers, they need these exercises for their own sanctification. They need to be reminded of what they already know; and they need to be reminded of it, under circumstances calculated to awaken their sympathies and touch their hearts; in the midst of their fellow-pilgrims; where prayer is made and praises are offered; where the spirit of grace, of adoration, humility and love is diffused all around them, and comes pressing with irresistible power upon their hearts.

I wish that I could cause my voice to be heard by those who, through pride, or vanity, or self-sufficiency, never come within the ordinary compass of the preacher's voice. I would admonish them of their guilt. and warn them of their danger. I would say to them plainly, but with all tenderness and affection: You are not only leading your children, and neighbors, and all within the influence of your example, to ruin; but you are destroying your own souls. For, whether we are here able to discover the direct connection between cause and effect, or not, Infinite Wisdom has unquestionably constituted such a connection; and experience and observation fully accord with this testimony "When, in the wisdom of God, the of inspiration: world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe."

If therefore, my hearers, you would become imbued with the spirit of the gospel, and obtain a safe guidance to heaven, you must attend on the preaching of the gospel; you must not forsake the assembling of yourselves together; you must hear, as well as read the word of God; and you must take heed how you hear.

Finally, I remark, that in order to understand the Scriptures, and feel the power of divine truth, we must

pray for a blessing on the word read and preached. The things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned. A measure of the same Spirit, by which the Scriptures were originally dictated, is therefore necessary, to open to our view, and apply to our minds the truths which they contain. And let it never be forgotten, that God has promised to give his Holy Spirit to those who ask for If therefore, you read or hear without prayer, you may expect to find the Bible often unintelligible, sometimes perplexing, and always unprofitable. Without this prerequisite, this preparation of heart, you cannot enter into its spiritual meaning. To the man, who comes to the word or to the house of God, with a proud heart and self-sufficient spirit, "leaning to his own understanding," and trusting to his own righteousness, without seeking divine assistance, or feeling and acknowledging his need of that assistance, the Scriptures will be "a dead letter," a "sealed book," "a savor of death unto death." As the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, to attend to the things which were spoken of Paul: so he must open our hearts, or we shall never receive the truth in the love of it, and yield to it a cheerful and habitual obedience.

Thus necessary is the aid of the Holy Spirit, whether we read the Bible or hear the gospel preached. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase. And, in order to bring ourselves within the circle of his promises, and be sure of obtaining his blessing, we must ask for it; we must seek it with all our hearts; we must pray. Men are not enlightened, renewed, and sanctified, in an unconscious and inactive state. All who are saved, are indeed saved by grace; but it is by grace received, and not by grace despised and rejected; they are willing in the day of Christ's power. All who walk in the truth, are indeed led by

the Spirit; but they follow, voluntarily and cheerfully follow, this heavenly guide. God, indeed, worketh in them that are created anew unto good works, both to will and to do; but they, nevertheless, are all the while free agents, voluntarily yielding to the kindly influence, and working out their own salvation with diligence and carefulness, "with fear and trembling." We cannot know and obey the truth, without the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit; but for this spiritual assistance, we must pray, and to this purifying influence we must yield; or the Spirit will flee from us, and leave us in darkness and in sin.

In conclusion, let me add, my hearers, this subject is not without interest, deep and momentous interest, to For, if any of us are wandering without a guide in life, we shall continue to wander, till our feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and we perish in our wanderings; unless we take heed to the sure word of prophecy, and make it the man of our counsel and the rule of our faith. Yes, as we have seen, there is no other safe guide for us. Yes, as we have seen, neither instinct, nor conscience, nor reason, nor all these together, are sufficient to lead us into the paths of truth and duty, peace and blessedness. It is by "the incorruptible seed of the word" alone, applied by the Holy Spirit, that men can be born again; and "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And if any of us, my brethren, have been begotten again to a lively hope, through the gospel; that hope cannot be maintained in purity and steadfastness, without continual supplies of truth and grace; neither can we grow in grace, without the sincere milk of the word. For it is through the truth, contained in the holy Scriptures, that the redeemed are sanctified, and made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Let us not forget, that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; and be judged, not as those who lived and died without the light of the gospel; but as those who possessed the Scriptures; when it will be said of us, by way of distinction from the heathen world:

This book, this holy book, on every line
Marked with the seal of high divinity,
On every leaf bedewed with drops of love
Divine, and with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamped
From first to last, this ray of sacred light,
This lamp, from off the everlasting throne,
Mercy took down; and in the night of Time
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow;
And evermore beseeching men, with tears
And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live!

Let us, my hearers, thus read, thus believe, thus live. Let us take heed unto this sure word of prophecy, till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts.

—Amen.

## LECTURE III.

# CHRISTIAN FAITH THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

#### 2 PETER L 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS REOTHERLY KIND-WESS, AND TO REOTHERLY KINDRESS CHARITY.

THE Christian character, as exhibited in the Scriptures, is a consistent, a perfect character. It is composed, indeed, of distinct parts; but these parts are fitly ioined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part. When the Roman orator said, "all human arts and sciences are united by a common chain," he used a figure of speech, which may be applied, with equal propriety, to the Christian graces and virtues. For, although these graces and virtues are objects of distinct contemplation and description; yet they are so closely united, so mutually dependent, so inseparably connected, that they cannot exist, much less flourish, in a state of separation. Springing from a common principle, they live or die together. Where that principle operates, none of them can ordinarily cease to be; and where that principle is wanting, none of them can exist. They are branches of the same stock, fruits of the same vine, streams from the same fountain, effects of the same cause. A man cannot, for instance, possess the quality of godliness or real piety, without charity; nor that of charity, or true benevolence, without temperance; nor that of temperance, or a due regulation of his passions and appetites, without both piety and benevolence; because the principle, which produces one of these branches of the Christian character, will, wherever it exists and has room for operation, produce them all.

It is true, men may put on the appearance, the external form of one virtue, while they are evidently destitute of another, while they are habitually guilty of the opposite vice. But, in such cases, we may be sure, there is nothing more than appearance, external form, a mere show of virtue. It is true, likewise, that peculiar circumstances and trials of life may call into exercise some of the Christian graces, more frequently than others; and thus render them more vigorous and prominent. Different persons, therefore, may appear to excel in different traits of Christian character. Still every consistent Christian, in ordinary circumstances, must possess, at least in a degree, all these traits of character; and the nearer any man approaches to perfection, the more completely will they all be united in him, and displayed by him. With a view to this perfection, (for the Scriptures never propose a lower standard as the object of our pursuit,) the apostle uttered the exhortation in our text: "And besides this," or "for this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

It is my intention, by permission of Divine Providence, to make this text the foundation of a series of Lectures on christian Character.\* If properly presented, the subjects involved cannot fail to interest all christians, and all who wish to know what constitutes the perfection of christian character. Let me, then, request those who hope, that they are Christians, as well as those who desire to be Christians, to attend this course of lectures with seriousness and candor, and faithfully apply to themselves the practical topics and remarks, as they are presented. And may God grant to each one of us a discriminating mind, a feeling heart, and an applying conscience.

The first discourse, in the series, naturally brings before our minds the subject of *faith*; a subject so frequently brought to view in the New Testament, and so often represented as not only essential to Christian character, but as the very foundation of Christian morality and of all enduring hope, that it can never be exhausted, nor too frequently explained and enforced from the pulpit.

We have already made the remark, that all the Christian graces are united in every consistent and finished Christian character; but we may now add to the remark, that faith possesses, in certain respects, a preeminence among them; since it is the bond of their union. It can, indeed, no more exist alone, than temperance, patience, charity, or any other Christian grace or virtue. Still, however, it holds among them a place of peculiar importance and distinction. Its alliance to each is immediate and direct. It is the very centre of the circle, in which they all move; or, to adopt a different figure, it is the key-stone of the arch, the foundation of the whole edifice. Hence, in our text, it is

<sup>\*</sup> This and the seven lectures which follow, in immediate succession, were written and first delivered in Dedham; subsequently, they were delivered in Middlebury, Vt., and in Boston; and recently, in connection with the two additional lectures from the same text, in Northboro' and Dudley.

placed first in order, as denoting that part of the Christian character, to which all others are to be added: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

In speaking on the subject of faith in this connection, I shall first endeavor to ascertain the meaning of the term, in its general acceptation: secondly, I shall attempt to show what is meant by Christian faith, in particular; and thirdly I shall deduce from the subject some practical inferences, and make a brief application of the whole.

First, then, let it be observed and remembered, that faith, in the general acceptation of the term, implies a positive act of the mind, in view of the evidence attending any given subject. It is not a mere passive impression, in submission to authority. It is not a mere fleeting opinion or careless conjecture, without examination or precedent doubt. On the contrary, it is a settled and prevailing conviction, after careful inquiry and deep reflection. Of course, it includes a confidence in the opinions adopted and declared, or a reliance on the truth of the report, which comes attended with the testimony of credible witnesses and concurring circumstances. It is a trust. an inward persuasion, which prompts to action, and produces a steady and corresponding course of conduct. you perceive, that it differs essentially from mere conjecture, from a loose and floating opinion, from an inconsiderate, though sincere, profession, and even from a careless admission of a proposition or reported fact, however true. We may profess to believe, and even seem to ourselves to believe that, for which we have

no evidence, and to which we have devoted no attention. But, in this case, whether the profession be true or false, the sentiment which gave rise to it, is not faith; it is a mere conjecture, an empty speculation, a floating, evanescent opinion. It will never, therefore, open to us a fountain of consolation, nor furnish us with any steady and enduring principle of action; and whenever we are called to trial with reference to the subject, notwithstanding our strong professions and supposed sincerity, our inactivity will betray our want of faith.

The justice of the preceding remarks is abundantly. proved by experience and observation. How often do we hear men, under the influence of some deep rooted prejudice, or strong passion, or ardent desire, declare, with apparent sincerity, their belief of opinions and reports, not only without evidence and improbable in themselves, but absolutely absurd! But try their confidence; put them to the test of action; and you will soon discover, where their personal interest is involved, that they are unwilling to trust to the reports, which they had professed to credit, or rely on the truth of the sentiments, which they had hastily professed, and perhaps passionately defended. I may add, that this want of confidence in our own professions is often apparent to others, while we are deceiving ourselves and vainly boasting of our sincerity. For passion and preindice blind that mind only, in which they find a lodgment. The heart, indeed, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

It is true, the term faith is sometimes used in a loose, indefinite manner, to denote a mere unsettled opinion, a speculative notion, a fanciful conjecture, or a careless profession of a sentiment, in which no confidence is placed; and which, of course, furnishes no efficient

principle of action. Even an inspired apostle, reasoning with those, who had perverted the doctrine of justification by faith to purposes of licentiousness, adopting their phraseology and accommodating himself to their mode of reasoning, uses the term in this general and indefinite sense, when he says: "Faith without works is dead, being alone." But the circumstances, under which this and the connected declarations were made, by no means authorize us, in ordinary cases, to use the term in the same sense. Especially should we avoid thus using it, when it is made to denote the instrument of justification, and the ground of our hope of salvation. Had the apostle James been speaking or writing to others, concerning these licentious perverters of truth, he would probably have expressed the same sentiment in different language, and used the term faith, with the apostle Paul, in a higher and more definite sense, to denote an inward sentiment, a cordial belief; he would have said: "That careless profession, that cold assent of the understanding, which produces no effect on the heart or life, is not faith. For faith," he would have added, "is an operative principle, an animating sentiment, a consent of the heart, a trust which yields support under trials, a confidence which never fails to produce resolution and action."

It is true, likewise, that there are different degrees of faith, according to the nature and force of the evidence presented to the mind, and according to the antecedent state of the mind itself; degrees from simple probability to moral certainty. There is a weak faith and a strong faith, an incipient belief and a mature belief, a partial persuasion and a full persuasion, a faith mixed with doubts and fears and a full assurance of faith, a faith arising from evidence involved in the subject itself, and a faith resting on testimony; in a word, a

faith supported by the declaration of human witnesses and concurring circumstances, and a faith relying on divine promise and confirmed by the manifestation of supernatural power and the direct and miraculous interposition of Heaven. But in all cases and in every degree, the nature of the principle is the same, implying a conviction of the understanding, including a consent of the heart and will, and producing a corresponding course of conduct.

Secondly, we come to the consideration of Christian faith, in particular. A recollection of what has been said, however, will supersede the necessity of adding any remarks on the nature of the principle, with a particular reference to Christianity. The peculiarities of Christian faith depend chiefly on these four things: the appropriate objects; the kind of evidence, by which it is supported; the manner, in which it is produced; and the consequences, which result from it.

1. The appropriate objects of Christian faith are the doctrines of the gospel. Christians are, indeed, sometimes said to believe in God, in a manner which seems to make Him the direct object of their faith, irrespective of what the Scriptures teach them, concerning his nature, attributes and government. But this mode of speech, if examined, will be found to imply a belief of what he has revealed to man concerning himself, his mode of existence, his counsels and operations. In the same general and apparently exclusive manner, they are likewise said to believe in Christ. But this evidently denotes their belief not merely of his existence and advent; but of what he was in his original nature, of what he did and suffered in his mediatorial office and character, and of what he taught by precept and example, as the Great Teacher of truth and rightequaness. For he is the author and finisher of all

saving faith; yea, the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe. They are, moreover, sometimes said to believe in the Holy Spirit; as if the admission of the fact of his personal existence were enough to constitute evangelical faith. But the declaration is clearly meant to include much more; to imply a belief of all that he has inspired the apostles and prophets to teach and place on sacred record, for the edification of the church in all ages. With a similar figure of speech, I add, they are said to believe the prophets and apostles themselves, to believe the word of God and the gospel of Christ. But all these declarations, when analyzed and viewed in connection with their respective contexts, are found to involve the same meaning and denote the same thing; a belief of the doctrines which compose the gospel, of the truths contained in the inspired word, of the sentiments uttered by those holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

To constitute Christian faith, it is not enough to believe with the devils, that "there is one God;" it is not enough to believe with the mere nominal Christian, in the historical fact, that Jesus was the promised Messiah; it is not enough to believe generally and indefinitely, that the Bible is the word of God and contains a revelation of the will of God. The objects of your faith, to furnish motives of action, to render it an efficient and operative principle, to constitute it a saving, Christian faith, must be particular, definite, comprehensive; must embrace what God has revealed, what Christ has said, what the Holy Spirit has taught, what the Scriptures declare to be true.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that the mind of every Christian must necessarily act on every proposition, or comprehend the meaning of every sentence in the Bible. There are in the sacred writings, many things hard to be understood; many things adapted to particular ages and particular classes of men; many things involving mysteries, in all ages and in view of all finite minds. But I do say, that Christian faith admits every truth, as soon as it is presented and as far as it is understood; that it embraces, as soon as they are fairly and fully exhibited to its view, the particular branches as readily and implicitly as it does the general scheme of the gospel. It does not admit the whole in gross; and then, as is too often the case, reject the parts in detail. It rejoices where it can comprehend the designs of Heaven, and vindicate to men the ways and purposes of God; but without gain-saying, it receives the divine testimony, even where the reasons of the divine operations and commands are concealed from the view of the finite understanding, and locked up in the depths of infinite wisdom.

2. We remark, that the evidence by which Christian faith is supported, is partly human and partly divine. It is human, so far as we rest on the testimony of man. communicated through the medium of history and It is human, too, so far as we are influenced, in forming our religious opinions, by the authority of example or the relations of experience. But it is divine, so far as the truth brings with itself to our minds the marks of a divine origin, the impress of divinity, the seal of the finger of God, the display of infinite wisdom and benevolence. It is divine, too, so far as it is seen to be attended by miraculous power and a direct interposition of Heaven. It is divine, likewise, so far as the influences of the Holy Spirit incline us to attend to the things which belong to our everlasting peace, remove the prejudices and passions which had darkened our understandings, and thus

open our hearts to receive the truth in the love of it.\*

3. Hence, we add, that Christian faith is produced by a divine operation, by the influences of the Holy Spirit on the mind and heart of the believer, by the inward grace, which prepares the way for the reception of divine truth, and gives efficacy and impression to the word of God. Jesus Christ is said to be both the author and finisher of this faith; and it is expressly ranked by an apostle among the fruits of the Spirit, and called a gift of God. Let it not be supposed, however, that men are passive in believing any more than they are in obeying the gospel. God deals with us as with rational and accountable beings, in the one case as in the other. Men must "work out their own salvation" with zeal and diligence, "with fear and trembling;" "while God worketh in them," both to believe and obey, "both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure." In the day of Christ's power his people The influences of the Holy Spirit must be willing. on their hearts and minds, are always consistent with their free agency. They are never compelled to believe without evidence, nor to submit against the dictates of their sober judgment, nor to act in opposition to rational and holy motives. But in this whole process of new creation, the grace of God is adapted to the nature, the wants and the capacities of men.

<sup>\*</sup> This distinction may not be obvious to every mind at first view. Still, I apprehend, the foundation of it will be discovered by all who carefully examine the subject with a discriminating analysis. For saving faith always includes what has been technically denominated historical faith. But the latter depends solely on that kind of evidence which may be viewed and estimated by a mind connected with a depraved heart. Still this evidence is necessary though not sufficient to produce saving faith. This needs, in addition to the other, a species of evidence which the carnal mind unterly rejects; which is spiritual, experimental; which addresses itself to the affections as well as the understanding, and which can find admittance into that heart only, which is opened, as was Lydia's of old, by the Spirit of the Lord, and thus prepared to love the truth.

They are aided graciously, not compelled arbitrarily. They are moved gently, not forced violently. They follow willingly, not by compulsion. They are led to consider, to inquire, to examine, to judge, and thus brought to believe from conviction, to submit from choice, to obey from the heart.

Still it is true, that no man ever did or ever will believe the self-condemning doctrines, submit to the selfhumbling conditions, or obey the self-denying precepts of the gospel without the aid of the Holy Spirit. the natural man," saith the Scripture, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned." Nav more; according to the same authority, "the carnal mind is enmity against God: it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." Still is it true, that faith is the gift of God, the purchase of Christ, the work and fruit of the Spirit. Still is it true, that salvation is of the Lord: boasting is excluded; and those who believe with the heart to the saving of their souls, will forever have occasion to ascribe the glory of their salvation to God, and be ready to say with the Psalmist, "not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

4. We remark once more, that the consequences which result from Christian faith, are obedience to the divine will, and consolation and hope in the divine promises. We have said before, that all faith implies confidence in the truth of the opinions embraced, and produces a corresponding course of conduct. True Christian faith, therefore, must, as a natural consequence, yield obedience to the requisitions of the gospel, and draw support and consolation from its exceedingly great and precious promises. The Scriptures everywhere represent faith as the fundamental principle of the Chris-

tian's life and conversation, and the never failing source of his inward peace and joy.

Christians are said to be justified by faith, saved by faith and by faith united to Christ. According to inspired testimony they live, they stand, they walk by faith. They dwell and abide in faith. Faith is the substance of those things for which they hope; and to them, it is the evidence of things not seen. In a word, "being justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed, this inward joy and outward obedience are not only the consequences, but the proofs of genuine Christian To the Christian, examining himself in order to ascertain whether he is in the faith, both of these remarks are important. To others, who would form a judgment concerning us, the latter species of evidence only can be fully exhibited. It is true, a man living in sin and the neglect of prescribed duty may say, "I have faith" and "peace in believing;" but the stern rebuke of the apostle James, as the passage might be rendered, will always be applicable to such boasters: "Show me your faith by your works." Without this proof of sincerity, we are still authorized to pronounce all profession to be hypocritical and vain. Faith, indeed, without works, or rather antecedent to works, justifies the believer before God, who can look on the heart and behold the living principle, ready to burst forth into action. But works, external acts of obedience, the natural fruits of genuine faith are necessary to furnish evidence of his justification, to men who can look only on the outward appearance-necessary to exhibit to them proof of the sincerity of his professions, and show them that the belief, which he declares is positive, a living principle, a consent of the judgment, will and affections; or, to adopt the significant language of the apostle, "a believing with the heart."

Having thus endeavored to explain the nature of faith in general, and to exhibit the peculiarities of Christian faith, we have only to make the proposed application of the subject. This I shall attempt to do, with as much brevity as possible, in a few direct, practical inferences.

1. We infer from our subject, that Christian faith is necessary, not only to constitute Christian character and lay a foundation for Christian hope; but to render any individual act of the Christian's life acceptable in the sight of Heaven. Every Christian grace and virtue, it must be admitted, is subservient to every other, and goes to constitute a part of the whole character. But to produce this combined result, each must be added to the others, and all, to faith, as the fundamental principle of "the divine life." We are not, however, obliged to resort to argument and inference to establish this position, and show the absolute necessity of Christian faith to a well founded hope of salvation. For an inspired apostle has expressly declared, that "without faith it is impossible to please God." And in stronger language, Christ himself has said: "He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." How dangerous, how delusive, how fatal even, must be the notion, that there is something holy and acceptable to a holy God, in the formal worship and negative, selfish morality, which are connected with an unbelieving heart! Trust not, I beseech you, to the form of godliness, without the power thereof. Place not your hopes of heaven on that visible morality, that shadow of virtue, that will-worship, that lip-service, those external resemblances of piety and benevolence, which proceed from merely selfish

motives and worldly policy, or even from blind instinct and unsanctified natural affection. It is not religion: it is not pleasing to God; it is, at least, consistent with entire depravity of heart and utter destitution of that holiness, without which no one can enter the kingdom of heaven. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. He looketh not on the outward appearance, but on the heart. He sees the secret springs of human action. He tries the reins of the children of men. all the motives and principles by which every man is Wherefore examine yourselves, whether ve actuated. are in the faith, whether your actions proceed from a settled belief in the doctrines, and your hopes of salvation arise from an interest in the promises of the gospel?

2. We infer, that the doctrine of justification by faith alone, is perfectly consistent with that of a future retribution according to works, according to personal character, "according to the deeds done in the body." These doctrines are both explicitly taught in the Scriptures. But they have sometimes been represented by cavillers, as inconsistent with each other; and not unfrequently one of them has been insisted on and exalted. to the neglect, and almost to the exclusion of the other, even by professing believers and accredited preachers of the gospel. Now, our subject, as illustrated in this discourse, exhibits these two great doctrines in complete harmony with each other. It teaches us, that the redeemed are justified by faith, not because there is any merit in simply believing the truth; but because God has made this a condition of salvation; because he sees in genuine faith the very principle of reformation, the very germ of virtue, the very essence of holiness, the foundation of an entirely new character-even a newness of heart, leading to new obedience. "If any man be in Christ," said our apostle, "he is a new creature; old things are done away; behold, all things are become new." That is, if any man becomes a believer, a radical change takes place in his moral character and spiritual state. His sins, through the mercy of God, applying the atonement of Christ, are forgiven, covered over, blotted out from the book of remembrance. His old character is taken away, and a new character formed; and according to this new character will be his final judgment and future and everlasting condition.

On the one hand, therefore, let not those, who make a careless profession of faith, hope for justification, while they continue in sin. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, and give account of the deeds done in the body. Nor, on the other hand, let any expect to make atomement for sin, or hope to be saved by works of righteousness which they perform; remembering, that it is only by grace, through faith, that a sinner can be justified and saved. Let these two great doctrines of the gospel, thus beautifully consistent, thus harmonizing in the glorious scheme of salvation, be kept constantly in view; quickening us to obedience, and leading us to ascribe all the glory of our salvation to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

—Amen.

## LECTURE IV.

## CHRISTIAN COURAGE.

### 9 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BEOTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

"THE path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Christian character is not completely formed at once. Though there must of necessity be some definite period for its commencement; yet its advancement to maturity requires time and a diligent use of the means of grace, with the continued blessing of Heaven. Though conversion is instantaneous, sanctification is progressive. Though the Christian graces are united by a common bond, and the Christian virtues spring from a common principle; yet are they subject to continual modification, and capable of unlimited improvement. Every real Christian has faith in the doctrines of the gospel; and, of course, possesses a portion of that holy temper, and performs some of those pious and benevolent acts, which are the necessary fruits of Christian faith. But all true believers have not the same degree of faith: nor have all made the same advancement in holiness of temper and in habits of righteousness. In some, the work of grace is but

just begun. They are born again; but they are yet mere babes in Christ Jesus; subject to often infirmities; and to preserve their spiritual life and promote their growth in grace, they need to be fed with milk and nourished with care. And in all, while in this state of discipline and probation, the divine life is incomplete, and the moral and spiritual character capable of im-Their principles of obedience may be strengthened; their motives of action may become more pure and elevated; their conduct may be rendered more consistent and effective: their whole character may be exalted, and brought nearer to that high and holy standard, which is delineated in the gospel, and illustrated by the example of its divine author. To all, therefore, who have commenced the Christian course, we are authorized to apply the exhortations of the gospel; to persevere, to press forward, to grow in grace, to make continual advancement toward perfection. To such, to all such, we may say, in the language of our text: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

Having in a preceding lecture, under this text, spoken on the subject of faith, I shall in this, confine my observations to the subject, which is suggested next in order: "Add to your faith virtue." The term virtue, in this connection, however, needs some explanation, to furnish us with a definite subject of discourse.

Let it be observed, then, that the Greek word, from which it is here translated, and the Latin word from which by etymology it was derived, are in their general signification of similar import to our English terms courage, fortitude and heroism. And, although by

general custom and consent, the term virtue has in our language acquired a different and more extended signification; not merely denoting one property, but comprehending all the constituent parts of a good character; vet the connection in which it stands in our text, seems clearly to limit its import to its etymological meaning. Accordingly all the commentaries which I have consulted, sanction this interpretation. Macknight, in a note on the text, says of the term virtue: "As it is mentioned by Peter among a number of particular virtues, it cannot signify a right moral conduct in general; but agreeably to the original sense of the word, it here means courage." Similar remarks are made by Doddridge and others. The subject of our present discourse, then, is Christian heroism, holy fortitude or moral courage; courage to profess our faith in Christ, before a gainsaying world; and to do the will of our heavenly Father, notwithstanding all the allurements, temptations and reproaches of a wicked and perverse generation.

In discoursing on the subject of Christian courage or heroism, I propose:

I. To attempt a description of this property of the human mind, as connected with Christian character.

II. To show its importance in this relation; and

III. To suggest some reflections on the subject, by way of application, and for purposes of personal improvement.

I Courage or valor, abstractly considered, is a natural, not a moral quality. It may exist in a wicked man, and be employed in a bad cause; or it may be connected with religious principle, and be exerted in acts of piety and deeds of benevolence. It becomes, therefore, morally good or evil, and produces happiness or misery, according to the moral qualities with which

it is associated. In an impenitent sinner it stimulates to crime, and thus increases and aggravates guilt. In a Christian, it assumes by its connection a holy nature, and animates and urges forward to the performance of the noblest deeds of benevolence. Like the natural sympathies and other original qualities of the mind, it may be sanctified by divine grace; and when thus sanctified, it may be cultivated and strengthened; and by this means strength and vigor may be imparted to every Christian principle.

From the preceding view it will be readily perceived, that holy courage or Christian heroism differs essentially from rashness and obstinacy; from the rashness which runs into temptation, provokes opposition and delights in contention; from the obstinacy which for the sake of consistency, blindly adheres to every adopted opinion: contends for trifles with a zeal which nothing but essential principles and fundamental truths could justify; and with a pertinacious and bigoted spirit seeks the vain glory of martyrdom. courage of a Christian, on the contrary, does not require him to court danger, or rashly and obstinately to expose himself to useless trials. It considers before it It deliberates before it decides. It even retracts when it is convinced of error; and it is always ready to listen to sober argument with meekness and candor. Indeed, this forbearance under provocations, forgiveness of injuries and readiness to acknowledge faults and retract errors, is among the highest exercises and noblest manifestations of true courage. But where truth is seen and duty calls, it advances without dismay: and it never voluntarily relinquishes the pursuit in a good cause, though dangers rise and death threatens.

It will be seen, too, that this sanctified courage or

holy fortitude, according to our definition, is perfectly consistent with Christian meekness and condescen-It emboldens its possessor to declare his sentiments without equivocation, and defend them with firmness; but it does not prevent his doing it with candor, with compassion, with modesty and in a manner the least offensive. It stimulates him to action. under the influence of moral obligation, and in vindication of his high privileges. But it permits him, while in the exercise of his own rights and the discharge of his own duty, sacredly to regard the rights of others, and leave them to the free and conscientious discharge of their duty. It leads him to oppose error and vice with firmness; but it does not compel him to do it with violence and by acts of cruelty. On the contrary, it allows him to reprove with meekness; to correct with tenderness; to pursue the work of reformation and accomplish the object of his benevolent desires, by the mildest and most compassionate mea-The Christian, animated with courage and softened by compassion, neither turns from his course on account of difficulties and dangers to himself, nor pursues it with violence and injury to others. He will not intentionally wound the feelings of a weak brother, nor give unnecessary offence even to those whom he is obliged to account enemies of truth and righteousness. He dares to be singular, where singularity is a duty, where he cannot comply with custom and go with the multitude without sin; but he does not love singularity for its own sake, he does not churlishly refuse to associate with the inhabitants of the country where he dwells, for all social purposes, nor to conform to any of their innocent customs and laudable pursuits.

The union of fortitude and condescension is beauti-

fully displayed in the character of the apostle Paul. In all matters of indifference, he yielded to the innocent prejudices both of friends and foes. "If meat." said he, "make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Again: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews: to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law: to them that are without law. as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law of Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Thus in things not essential to truth and duty, he condescended to weakness, and yielded even to prejudice. this same meek and condescending apostle declare his inflexible purpose, in cases where the cause of truth demanded courage and exposure to danger, where duty required him to disregard the timid counsels of his dearest friends. When entreated not to expose his liberty and life by preaching the gospel at Jerusalem, his reply was: "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart; for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus." With reference to the same danger and under a sense of the same duty, he said, on another occasion: "And now behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the

grace of God." His conduct on all occasions corresponded with the spirit of these professions and declarations; uniting meekness with firmness, prudence with courage, condescension with perseverance, compassion with fortitude.

The Christian of decision and strength of character, who possesses both fortitude and meekness, who has added to his faith both virtue and charity, will imitate this apostolic example. He will contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; but he will contend in the meekness of wisdom. He will stand fast and quit himself like a man; but he will do it like a man of benevolence as well as of fortitude. When duty calls him to oppose error and vice, he will do it with unshaken resolution and unconquerable perseverance, but not without kindness and compassion. When obliged to act in opposition to the counsels of friends, though he will be firm and resolute in his purpose and unwavering in his integrity; he will nevertheless proceed with a tender regard to their feelings, and even lament the necessity of crossing their opinions and giving them the least pain. "Without harshness or violence," (I here use the language of another,) "he will continue every moment to effect some part of his design, coolly replying to each ungracious look and indignant voice: I am sorry to oppose you. I am not unfriendly to you; while thus persisting in what excites your displeasure. It would please me to have your approbation and concurrence; and I think I should have them, if you would seriously consider my reasons. But, meanwhile, I am superior to opinion. I am not to be intimidated by reproaches; nor would your favor and applause be any reward for the sacrifice of my object. It is enough for me that I stand approved to my own conscience, in the sight of Heaven.

It is enough that I can appeal with confidence to the highest authority in the universe!"

II. I proceed, as was proposed, to show the importance of this sanctified courage as a constituent part of Christian character. The primitive Christians, to whom the exhortation in our text was originally addressed, stood in peculiar need of this noble quality. Exposed, as they were, to continual reproach and frequent assaults of violence and outrage, they must have renounced their faith and shrunk from the service of their Master, had they not been supported by a holy fortitude, an invincible courage, a fear of God, which overcame the fear of everything besides.

But at the present time, in a Christian country, and especially under free institutions, there is not the same necessity for this courage, in order to produce and maintain an open profession of the principles, and a steady adherence to the practice of Christianity, as there was when and where persecution was authorized by civil authority. Still, however, a public Christian profession and a consistent Christian practice, always have excited opposition, and probably always will, (at least as long as infidelity, heresy and wickedness abound in the world,) subject a man to some trials. Still is the apostolic declaration true and of universal application, that "all they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." Even in our own country, blessed with the highest degree of religious liberty, and favored with institutions of the gospel in their simplest form, it requires no small degree of courage to become a consistent Christian. You may, indeed, profess to be a Christian, if you will still countenance and sanction the follies and vanities of a wicked world by your example, if you will live in conformity to the maxims and customs of the world, if you will follow the multitude, who forget God and live in sin. But the moment you come out from the world; and thus by your open profession and consistent deportment, rebuke their wickedness and folly, you will provoke their frown and be made to feel the effects of their displeasure.

Let a young man, for instance, who has grown up in vanity and associated with the profane in scenes of riot and dissipation, become seriously impressed with a sense of the wickedness of his course; let him forsake the companionship of sin, come out from the world, and withdraw himself from scenes of folly and vain amusement; let him profess his faith in Christ, devote himself to his God and Redeemer, and commence a course of conduct in strict conformity with his professions; and how soon will the finger of scorn be pointed at him; how readily will his former companions in iniquity, apply to him the most degrading epithets! Now, does it require no courage to meet this trial with firmness of purpose; and bear this reproach of the cross without shame? Must not the believer, in circumstances like these, be fortified with a strong resolution, before he can "quit himself like a man," and maintain his integrity? Must he not "add to his faith virtue," before he can support a high and consistent character, in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation?

This sanctified courage is necessary for the Christian, not merely at the commencement of his race, but through the whole course of his life; for his life is a warfare. He needs it not only when he first meets a frowning world, with his public profession; but also when he is called to defend his faith against cavillers, who assail him by the way. He needs it to enable him, with constancy and zeal, to discharge his

daily recurring and never-ending duties. But he needs it, especially, when called to practise some unfashionable virtue, to refuse compliance with some vain and sinful custom, to rebuke a wandering brother, to warn a careless sinner, to resist the progress of error and vice; in a word, he needs it every day, to give strength and consistency to his character; and render his life, at once, useful and happy.

It must be admitted, indeed, that this quality of the Christian character, as well as every Christian grace, may exist in different degrees; and be more or less necessary to a man, according to his peculiar situation and circumstances in life. But, without a measure of it, no man can be a consistent Christian; and the more any one possesses of it, the greater, other things being equal, will be his activity and the more efficient his exertions in the cause of truth and righteousness. Well, therefore, does the apostle exhort believers, and well may we repeat the exhortation, to cultivate this heroic disposition with the utmost care and diligence. Well may we exhort all, who have faith, to give all diligence, to "add to their faith virtue."

III. We come now to the application of the subject. And here let me remind you, in the first place, that Christian courage must be connected with Christian faith. The former cannot exist without the latter. You may be thoughtless and fearless, rash and obstinate; you may neither fear God nor regard man, you may be bold in transgression, you may impiously raise your puny arm against the Almighty, and run even upon the thick bosses of his buckler. But you cannot possess a holy fortitude, nor exercise true moral courage, till you are justified by faith, and reconciled to God. Although there is something in courage, viewed as a natural quality, and even when displayed by a

wicked man, which excites the admiration and elicits the applause of mankind; yet it can be of no ultimate benefit to its possessor. No; it can only aggravate his guilt and increase his condemnation. For unsanctified courage naturally leads to crime, and emboldens in iniquity; and thus produces mischief and misery in the world. See, then, that you are "rooted and grounded in the faith," that you have made "a good profession," that you are engaged in "a righteous cause," that you are pursuing the path of truth and the way to heaven, before you summon the aid of courage, and resolve to persevere unto death.

Let me remind you, in the second place, that Christian fortitude is consistent with Christian meekness and condescension. While, therefore, you boldly profess your faith, manifest a meek and quiet spirit. While you contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints, exercise a spirit of candor and forbearance toward them who are of a contrary mind. Never forget that the weapons of the Christian warfare are not carnal, but spiritual. While you resolutely oppose error, and decidedly discountenance vice, be careful to "speak the truth in love," and administer reproof with meekness and compassion. While you determine to give up nothing important in sentiment or practice, for the sake of satisfying prejudice or passion; condescend to men of low estate: bear the infirmities of the weak; contend not for trifles; take heed, that you give no unnecessary offence to the prejudiced, or even to the perverse, "to the Greek, or Jew, or the church of God." "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;" avoiding everything unimportant in profession and practice, which would offend a weak brother, or bring reproach on the Christian name. While you suffer neither the ridicule of the profane,

nor the timid counsels and cautious maxims of the fearful and unstable, to shake your purpose, or turn you from your course of active piety and benevolence; proceed with mildness, with prudence, with gentleness and love. In a word, while you "add to your faith virtue," forget not to add likewise "brotherly kindness and charity."

Let me remind you, in the third place, of the necessity of "giving all diligence" to the cultivation of this exalted virtue; to the acquisition of that courage and fortitude and strength of character, which will enable you to resist temptation, overcome the world, and persevere in the ways of well doing, even unto the end. With this view, consider the example of the holy apostles; of the glorious company of the martyrs; above all, of the great Captain of our salvation, "who endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Recollect, too, the exhortations and promises, which are scattered through the sacred Scriptures; exhortations to steadfastness and perseverance in the faith and obedience of the gospel; promises of support, of success. of a crown of glory to all who seek, strive, and endure unto the end.

Finally; remember from whom your help cometh; and look unto him for support under trials, and for resolution to meet dangers. His grace is sufficient for you. "Wait, therefore, on the Lord; and be of good courage. Wait on the Lord, and he will give you strength. Wait, I say, on the Lord."

# LECTURE V.

### CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

### 9 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

Between acquisition and effort there is a permanent connection. Nothing is ordinarily obtained without labor; nor can any one, without seeking, rationally expect to find, the object of his desire. The truth of this remark, in application to things temporal, will be admitted by all; because it is proved by universal experience. It is everywhere seen and acknowledged, that "the hand of the diligent maketh rich," while idleness leadeth to poverty. But concerning things spiritual and eternal, the acknowledgment of this truth is far less general; because the instructions of experience are here much more limited. Still however, it is a truth declared by inspiration, and illustrated and confirmed by the experience of every real Christian, that in religion, as well as in the ordinary concerns of life, there is a general and intimate connection between the means and the end, between exertion and acquisition, between diligence and success. The husbandman might as well expect to reap a plentiful harvest without sowing and cultivating his fields, as the Christian

might hope to grow in grace, and increase in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, without a diligent use of the appropriate means. economy of grace is perfectly analogous to that of nature. Temporal and spiritual blessings are alike the gifts of God; yet neither of them are ordinarily obtained without being sought. For both we are absolutely dependent; yet in the acquisition of both our agency is indispensably necessary. Hence the frequent and pressing exhortations of the apostles to believers, to be zealous and constant in their efforts for improvement, to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Hence in particular, the exhortation in our text: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

Having from this text delivered two discourses, one on faith and the other on virue, or Christian courage, I come now, in course, to illustrate and enforce that part of the exhortation, which relates to the acquisition of Christian knowledge: "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge." In the execution of this purpose, I shall attempt:

I. To describe Christian knowledge, as distinguished from faith and human learning;

II. To show its importance, both to our happiness and usefulness in life;

III. To point out the means, by which it may be most readily and certainly acquired.

L It must be obvious, at first view, that the knowledge, after which the apostle here exhorts Christians to aspire, as it respects its objects, admits of some limitation. For the exhortation was evidently designed to

be applicable to all classes of Christians. And however literature and the abstract sciences may be useful for a portion of the community, and therefore worthy of the cultivation of a few: vet the acquisition of them, in a high degree, for most men would be impracticable: and if practicable, it would be unprofitable, or worse than unprofitable; it would consume too much time to be consistent with the claims of benevolence. and the procuring even of the necessaries of life. the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus, an acquaintance with the doctrines and duties of the gospel. is within the reach of every believer: and, as we shall show in the sequel, important for the comfort and usefulness of all, in whatever condition of life they are placed. We are therefore authorized, by the nature of the subject, and the necessity of the case, to add a qualifying term, in expounding this part of the text; we are bound to limit the exhortation to the acquisition of Christian knowledge, or the knowledge of true religion.

But wherein, it may be asked, does Christian knowledge differ from Christian faith? We answer, that knowledge depends chiefly on the exercise of the understanding. It is the perceived relation between two objects of thought; whether the perception results from a single comparison, when the evidence is intuitive, or from a succession of comparisons, when it is deductive. But faith always includes a concurrence of the feelings, a consent of the heart, a submission of the will. The former, free from all emotion, exercises principally the intellectual powers; but the latter calls to its support, and involves in its operations, the strongest affections of the soul. The one therefore. includes a moral feeling, becomes a moral sentiment. and is a subject of moral discipline; but the other is purely an intellectual exercise, not under the control

of the will. It has in it nothing of a moral nature; and is, therefore, not a subject of moral accountability. A man may possess much knowledge on a subject, while his heart is opposed to the truths which it involves, and his whole conduct at variance with the principles which it establishes. Or he may admit the truth of a proposition, willingly submit to its authority, and practically regard its claims; while his views on the subject, are indefinite and indistinct. He may have faith, while his knowledge is limited, while he has much to learn concerning its relations and bearings. We do not mean to deny, that faith always implies the existence of a degree of knowledge. You cannot, for example, believe the gospel, without some general knowledge of the plan of salvation which it contains. Nor can you, according to the true meaning of the term, be said to believe any particular doctrine of the gospel, to which you have paid no attention, upon which your mind has never acted; of which, in its various relations, you choose to remain ignorant. Still, however, knowledge and faith are distinct subjects of contemplation. Of course, Christian knowledge and Christian faith may be viewed and treated of separately. We add, there may be different degrees of one of these qualities, in persons who possess the other in equal measure.

But it may be inquired again, wherein does Christian knowledge differ from human learning? We answer, that this difference does not depend solely on the subjects of knowledge. It is indeed true, that a man may make great progress in science and literature, without ever turning his attention to the study of theology, without either searching the Scriptures, or so contemplating the works of creation and providence, as to "look through nature, up to nature's God." It is

true, likewise, that a man of this description, however learned, however distinguished for his attainments both in literature and science, however extensive his knowledge of history and nature, however pure and critical his classical taste, however deep his researches into the economy of nature and the relations of things. however minute and comprehensive his observations on the properties both of matter and mind, in their different states and combinations, from the pebble to the planet, from the meanest insect to man, "the lord of all things here below;" it is true, likewise, I sav. that such a man will still be destitute of Christian knowledge. He may have studied merely to discover the relations between material things, or at most created beings; while the high relation between these and their Creator is entirely neglected. He may have devoted his whole attention to physical causes, and paid no regard to those which are efficient and final. Other men, besides atheistical philosophers; others even, besides deists and those who despise and neglect the Scriptures, may be destitute of Christian knowledge. You may have frequently read the Bible, you may have examined it with a critic's eye, you may have treasured up in your memory its principal contents, you may even have become able to define and explain, and defend or oppose, the precepts and doetrines of Christianity; and yet be destitute of that knowledge, which the apostle recommends in our text.

To furnish a positive answer to the inquiry before us, let it be observed, that Christian knowledge, though a subject of distinct contemplation, is nevertheless inseparably connected with Christian faith. It cannot stand alone; it can rest securely on no other foundation. Hence the propriety of the exhortation, "add to

your faith - knowledge." All that learning in the science of theology, all that critical acquaintance with the language of the Scriptures, which precedes faith, or is independent of it, is merely speculative knowledge; and consequently, while alone, unprofitable, and sometimes pernicious. It is a kind of knowledge which, in the words of an apostle, "puffeth up." It naturally fosters pride and produces a spirit of self-conceit. Hence that strife of words and vain jangling, which have interrupted the peace of the church from the beginning. Hence, too, that cavilling, reproach and ridicule, which men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, have uttered against the doctrines of the gospel and the humble professors of religion. Hence, likewise, that strange inconsistency, which defends Christianity in the gross, and denies and opposes it in de-Hence, finally, the propriety and force of that apostolic declaration, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Indeed, "zeal without knowledge is scarcely more fanatical and bigoted, than knowledge without faith.

True Christian knowledge, then, be it remembered, must always be connected with Christian faith. Knowledge, even of religious things, to be profitable to the soul and beneficial to mankind, must be spiritual, experimental, practical. This is the knowledge, which Christians are exhorted to seek with diligence; and this they must continually "add to their faith," till they are made perfect in glory; "where they shall see as they are seen, and know as they are known."

II. As was proposed, we proceed to show the importance of Christian knowledge, both to our happiness and usefulness in life.

We have seen, that faith may exist where there is but little knowledge. We have seen, too, that there

may be much speculative knowledge, where there is no genuine Christian faith, no experimental acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus. We may now add, that in both these cases, something is wanting to afford permanent peace of mind, or to produce a steady course of right conduct. To men in either of these conditions to the ignorant with faith, or to the learned without faith, you will look in vain for anything like enlightened charity or tender solicitude and judicious effort for the prosperity of the church and the happiness of mankind. While the man of speculative knowledge without faith, "leans to his own understanding," and exalts his perverted reason above the decisions of inspiration; in his vain imaginings transcends or goes beyond the authority of the Bible; with a presumptuous hand blots out the word written by the finger of God; with levity and irreverence descants on subjects of the most solemn nature, ridicules the serious as superstitious, reproaches the conscientious as bigoted, and as far as his influence extends, corrupts the sources of truth and undermines the foundations of righteousness; -- while the learned unbeliever thus exerts his extended and unhallowed influence, the ignorant believer, having zeal without knowledge and faith without much experience or observation, resolves rashly and executes presumptuously. He judges without reflection, and acts without prudence. He involves himself in needless perplexities and interrupts the harmony of society. Wherever his influence is felt he disturbs the peace of the church, and diminishes the happiness of mankind.

The character of the ignorant believer is, indeed, to be preferred to that of the learned infidel; because his pernicious influence is more limited; and because whatever of knowledge he possesses is under the direction of faith, and will be productive of inward consolation and external good. But beyond the sphere of his knowledge, his faith itself is so far from producing beneficial effects, that it becomes a fruitful source of evil. For the want of light, it will often lead him into the devious paths of error and delusion, and even urge him forward to the perpetration of deeds of darkness. He will not unfrequently mistake the mandates of a perverse will, for the dictates of conscience; and with a fatal sincerity follow the blind impulses of a depraved heart.

All those persecutions, of which real Christians have sometimes been guilty, may be traced to narrow and mistaken views of Christianity, to a blind zeal, to faith without knowledge. An increase of Christian knowledge. always produces increased catholicism: I say Christian knowledge, for it is peculiarly important here, to keep in mind the distinction between an experimental acquaintance with the truths of the gospel and that speculative knowledge of Christianity, which "puffeth up" with pride and self-conceit. This speculative knowledge may, indeed, be connected with a profession of catholicism, a verbal liberality, an indifference to truth and duty; and to this species of liberality, men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, often make high and sometimes exclusive pretensions. But for the production of a catholic temper and a liberal practice, such unsanctified knowledge will ever be found inadequate. It often speaks fair and promises well; but its acts never fail to display its real feelings. It smiles, but to deceive: and professes, that it may betray.

On the other hand, that knowledge, which is "added to faith," that acquaintance with the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, which arises from a self-appli-

cation of them, which is indeed spiritual, experimental, practical; -such knowledge always and at once produces self-abasement and enlarged charity. shows a man his own true character, and places his own sins before him in a strong light; but it disposes him to look chiefly at the virtues of his neighbor, and with the mantle of charity it covers a multitude of It sweeps away the prejudices of names and sects, and breaks down the barriers of party. gards the arbitrary lines, which ignorance and bigotry have drawn around "the church;" and delights to hold communion and take sweet counsel with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ. A Christian who diligently improves the means of knowledge, will learn, that "the kingdom of heaven consisteth not in meats and drinks," in modes and forms, in names and professions; but "in righteousness and peace," in piety and benevolence, in doing the will of his heavenly Father. He will perceive, that "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision"—neither this nor that peculiar external rite "availeth anything, but a new creature;" a faith, which works by love, a submissive will, a renewed heart and an obedient spirit. He will, of course, discover real Christians, connected with various denominations and in different communions; and he will readily extend to them all the right hand of fellowship, and embrace them all in the arms of Christian Thus beneficial are the effects of Christian knowledge; and thus important is it to our personal happiness and to our usefulness in social life.

III. I proceed, as was proposed, to point out the means by which Christian knowledge may be most successfully sought and readily acquired. Let it not be forgotten, however, that it must be added to faith, and built upon it. Without this foundation, the superstruc-

ture cannot be securely erected, nor firmly established. Whatever means might be prescribed, would be used in vain by those who have no Christian faith. The knowledge which they would acquire, would be merely speculative; leaving them ignorant of God, of their own hearts and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. With this remark in mind, then, let us proceed to the inquiry, what are the most appropriate means for the acquisition of Christian knowledge.

With this view, I remark, negatively;

- 1. That this knowledge cannot be acquired by con-Religious discussions, in the form of disputation, are of all kinds of contention the most unprofi-It is true, friendly conversation and a free communication of sentiment and experience among Christians, may serve to enlighten the mind and incite to They should, therefore, often speak one to another, and exhort one another daily. But the moment you enter the field of controversy, and assume the attitude of a disputant, you labor in vain and spend your strength for naught. You may, indeed, confound your adversary and triumph in your conquest over him; but you will not thus convince him of his error; nay, you will probably leave him more obstinately opposed than you found him, to you and your sentiments. Controversy always partakes of the nature of rivalry: it involves a desire to obtain the mastery; it engenders a spirit of emulation, and leads to altercation; it, therefore, almost invariably closes the heart against the reception of truth, and confirms the disputant in his adopted sentiments, however erroneous.
- 2. I remark, that the pursuit of general literature and abstract science, is not the direct road to Christian knowledge. Human learning is, indeed, profitable for the various purposes of life. It is even important, not

to say absolutely necessary, for all who are set for the defence of the gospel, who should be apt to teach, able to convince gainsayers, and rightly divide the word of truth; giving to every one a portion in due season; becoming all things to all men; furnishing milk for babes, and meat for strong men; exhorting, rebuking and reproving with all long suffering and doctrine. But to obtain an experimental acquaintance with duty, a practical knowledge of Christianity, it is of no avail. In the school of Christ, the learned seem to have little or no preëminence above the unlearned. He who runneth may read; and the wayfaring man, though a fool-he whose heart is right with God, of whatever standing in the literary world-may understand, as far as rules and motives of action, applicable to himself, are concerned, all the doctrines of the gospel. While we say this, however, and rejoice that the Scriptures furnish instruction adapted to all capacities, we add; let it not be supposed that they can be understood without attention, without thought, without inquiry and consideration, without using the appropriate means of Christian knowledge with diligence and The careless, the vain the self-sufficient and presumptuous, whether learned or unlearned, will remain ignorant, fatally ignorant, of the things which belong to their peace.

I remark therefore, positively;

1. That in order to obtain Christian knowledge, the Bible must be read, the Scriptures searched with frequency and attention. A Christian should never suffer a day to pass, without consulting these oracles of God. Nor should he ever read this sacred book without fixed attention and profound humility. When he places the Bible before him, he should remember that he stands on holy ground; that no profane cavils, or

vain speculations, or foolish jestings are to be admitted there; that it becomes not man to sit in judgment on the wisdom of God; but in meekness to inquire what God has taught, and what he requires. With these views and feelings, with a humble and earnest desire to learn the will of God, therefore, should he search the Scriptures.

Subordinate to the reading of the Bible, is the perusal of commentaries and other religious books, conversation with experienced Christians and constant attention on the faithful preaching of the gospel. But in all these cases ultimate reference must be had to the divine standard of truth and duty. "To the law and to the testimony" must we continually repair; and by the test of inspiration, must we try the works of every man, who assumes the office of teacher. Be persuaded, as you wish to increase in Christian knowledge, to read the Bible with increasing diligence and humility. Make this sacred book your constant companion, your familiar friend. Read therein by day. and meditate thereon by night. "As new born babes. desire the sincere milk of the word." "Take heed unto the sure word of prophecy until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."

2. Prayer, I remark, is another of the means by which Christian knowledge may be obtained. "If any man lack wisdom," says the apostle James, "let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." And to the same purpose, our Lord himself has said: "Ask, and ye shall receive." We are not, indeed, to expect to hear a voice from heaven in answer to our prayers; or to obtain an intuitive knowledge of what has already been taught by inspiration. But prayer, humble, spirittal prayer, prepares the mind for the recep-

tion of divine truth. If the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned, the enlightening influences of the spirit must be necessary to a clear view and an abiding sense of the truths, revealed by the Spirit. We should, therefore, not only search the Scriptures but pray for assistance to understand and apply them; we should unite spiritual prayer with the reading of the Bible: and make it part of our preparatory exercises in all our researches after truth, in the closet and in the house of God. Indeed, I shall be supported not only by the testimony of experience, but by the language of inspiration, when I affirm, that the Scriptures are "a dead letter," and the Bible "a sealed book," to those who attempt to read without prayer; with a self-righteous spirit. For saith an apostle: "The natnral man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

3. Christian knowledge, I remark again, may be treasured up and increased in the mind, by an habitual and practical regard to it. A truth discovered will be soon lost, or become obscure, if disregarded in practice. All speculative knowledge without practice, is indeed, obscure, indistinct and useless. But this is peculiarly the case with regard to the knowledge of spiritual things; for religious knowledge, as we have seen in this discourse, is always experimental and prac-"If any man," said our Saviour, "will do the will of my heavenly Father, he shall know of my doctrine, whether it be of God." And, with the same implication, an apostle has declared: "If any man be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso

looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Wherefore, my brethren, if you would retain and improve your Christian knowledge, let it be often brought to view, and kept in exercise by continual practice; or, to give the exhortation in the language of the apostle, to whose authority we have just appealed: "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls; but be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Finally; let all, who have faith, regard the exhortation in our text: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith—knowledge." Carefully use all the means of grace and knowledge. Rest not satisfied with present attainments, but continue to grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; till you appear in his likeness; till you are called home from this school of improvement, and admitted, where you shall "see as you are seen, and know as you are known."

# LECTURE VI.

## TEMPERANCE OR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

### S PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE ENGWLEDGE, AND TO EMOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

THE sensibilities on which the passions and appetites depend, are a constituent part of animal nature. They are possessed, in common, by all animals with which we are acquainted; and they were unquestionably implanted in them, by the Creator, for wise and benevolent purposes. Their utility, indeed, is perfectly obvious. They constitute the very spring of They give activity to animal life. animal action. They are essential to animal being; necessary, both to preserve an individual and to perpetuate a species. An individual, without them, would become an easy prey to other individuals differently formed, or through inactivity would soon perish for want of sustenance. A whole species, thus constituted, would soon become extinct; or, to extend the supposition indefinitely, the whole animal creation would remain inactive, gradually mouldering back to dust, and sinking into primeval chaos. But although these susceptibilities are common to all animals, and even essential to animal existence; yet would they be fatal to that existence,

without another original principle, of sufficient authority to restrain and regulate them. Such a principle, qualifying them for self-government and selfpreservation, has been furnished to all animals, by the same wise and benevolent Creator, who implanted in them the seeds of passion and appetite. In man, this higher quality, or controlling power, is reason; in other animals it is instinct. The latter is the more certain and uniform, in its operations; the former, the more exalted in its nature and extensive in its influence. Beasts and birds, for instance, discover instinctively and almost infallibly, the food and climate congenial to their nature. They can direct their course, from one region to another, without chart or compass; and without philosophical observation, or mathematical calculation, they know when the changing seasons require their migration from North to South and from South to North. They know, too, without being taught, what food will afford them nourishment, and what would diffuse poison through their system. They understand, without the aid of instruction or experience, the point to which they can, with safety. indulge their appetites. Nor do they often pass beyond this point, and violate the laws of instinct; never, indeed, except where instinct has been modified by the interfering influence of man. But here the power of instinct is limited. It cannot go beyond its contracted circle. It cannot move, but in its little sphere. cannot be elevated and improved by instruction, nor permanently changed and rendered hereditarily progressive by experience and observation. It can take no abstract views, make no calculations for futurity, and furnish no security against distant dangers. Its operations are confined to the present state and the passing hour.

Reason, on the contrary, the self-governing power in man, is slow in its operations, and often uncertain in its results; but its province is extensive, and its influence, when properly cultivated and duly exercised, is mighty. It is susceptible of instruction, and capable of unlimited improvement. Looking back on the past, and forward to the future, it learns by experience and observation; and its capacity increases with every acquisition. It is confined, in its researches, neither by time nor space. It ranges through the universe and calculates for eternity.

But although man possesses this intelligent nature, this rational faculty, this excursive power of discernment, abstraction, combination and deduction, by which he is distinguished from the beasts of the field, and exalted above the birds of the air, and constituted "lord of all things here below;" yet is he liable, peculiarly liable to the dangers of violent passion and inordinate appetite; and he is often led astray by his own lusts and enticed. Inasmuch as reason is more excellent in its nature and extensive in its operations, than instinct; in the same proportion is it more liable to be abused; and in the same degree is its abuse more pernicious. Thus man being obliged to reflect, observe and learn, before he can regulate his appetites and passions, with safety to himself and benefit to others; and having these propensities strengthened by the depravity consequent upon the first fatal indulgence in paradise, and inflamed by the ten thousand temptations, which surround him in a world lying in wickedness; too often yields to their solicitations, and degrades himself below the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and even the reptiles which crawl upon the earth.

To guard us against those temptations, which every-

where address themselves to our depraved propensities, to preserve us from the excessive and fatal indulgence of our animal appetites, to induce us to reflect, watch and pray, before we yield to the impulses of feeling; and thus to bring reason into the possession of its original prerogative, and the exercise of its legitimate authority over these inferior parts of the human constitution, is evidently the design of that portion of our text, which, in course, now comes before us: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith—temperance."

Temperance, according to the general import of the term, and as it is evidently used in our text, consists in an established regulation of all the passions and appetites of our nature, in a confirmed habit of selfgovernment, in the exercise of a restraining, directing, and controlling influence over all our feelings and propensities. It is true, the term has sometimes been used in a more restricted sense. Recently, indeed, it has been very much limited to the due regulation of one particular appetite. The reason for this recent use of the term in this restricted sense, probably is, that an intemperate indulgence of the appetite for intoxicating liquors, is in our country, the most common, and its pernicious effects the most obvious. Drunkenness, of all the forms of intemperance, is or at least has been among us, the most prevalent and odious. The consequences are the most destructive to the intemperate man himself, as well as the most injurious to his friends and to society at large. But, in accordance with the evident meaning of the term in our text, I shall not confine my remarks, in this discourse, to these partial and limited views of the subject: but shall treat of temperance in general, or self-government, or a due regulation of all the passions and appetites which belong to our common nature. In order to give the subject a practical bearing, I shall,

I. Endeavor to show the importance of self-government to personal happiness and general usefulness;

II. Attempt to prove, that this self-government is attainable; and then,

III. Suggest some rules to be observed, and means to be used, in order to make the attainment.

First, We have already made the remark, that the susceptibilities, on which the passions and appetites depend, were implanted in man, as well as in other animals, for wise and benevolent purposes. mark, with the considerations suggested in proof of it, we confidently oppose to the Stoical doctrine, which inculcates complete insensibility, and requires the suppression of all emotion. For sensibility under passive impressions, as well as the more active social sympathies of our nature. Christianity recognizes, as in themselves innocent. It requires not their eradication, nor permanent suppression: but it demands merely, that they be duly regulated and properly controlled by enlightened reason and a good conscience. It allows us to "eat and drink," and indulge every natural appetite and constitutional propensity, to a proper degree and according to just and wholesome rules. But an undue indulgence, or an indulgence contrary to prescribed rules and authoritative precepts, or in a manner calculated to injure ourselves or others, it entirely and absolutely prohibits. Hence, as we likewise observed before, reason was given to man among other things, for the purposes of self-government; and when enlightened by revelation and prompted by conscience, it is designed to maintain an habitual control over all the inferior, though essential, powers and susceptibilities of human nature. And this observation, with the

considerations which follow in proof of it, we oppose, with equal confidence, to those licentious maxims of the Epicureans, which sanction and encourage unlimited and unrestrained indulgence.

That it is important for every man to acquire and maintain this self-government; to place an habitual restraint on his passions, and exercise a constant control over his appetites, must be obvious, not only to those who have attended to the injunctions of inspiration on the subject; but to all, who have observed the tendency of unbridled passion, and seen the effects of unrestrained indulgence. This due restraint, this steady controlling influence, this habitual self-government, is important to a man, both as it regards his bodily health, his intellectual improvement, and his peace of mind. Nor are its beneficial effects, as some seem to suppose, confined to his own happiness and personal interest in this life. It extends, in its influence, to others. It looks forward to all future time. and ends not even in eternity. It has a bearing on the happiness of all within the sphere of the influence of him by whom it is possessed, and is thus important to his usefulness in society. But above all is it important to prepare him for the society of angels; and qualify him for the pure and sublime joys of heaven.

The truth of these general remarks we may see illustrated in the operation of those unrestrained passions and appetites, which fall under our observation. Look, for example, at the man, who has no control over his irascible passions, who is easily provoked and violently agitated with anger, who is subject to the consuming fires of envy, malice and revenge; who thus gives the reins to any such passion, as may chance to claim the ascendency in his bosom; look, and you will see a proof of the truth of our remark.

Behold, how he is changed, when the objects of any of these passions are presented to his view, and brought to bear on his mind. Before, perhaps, he could reason fairly, and act judiciously; now, he talks like an idiot and acts like a madman. In his unimpassioned state, you may have found him mild, candid and kind; but agitated by his ruling passion, he has become fierce, reproachful and cruel. Had you seen him in his calm and cool moments, you might have taken him for a happy man; he certainly would have increased your happiness by everything, which he said and did. his excited passions have transformed him into a different being; he has no longer peace within, nor will he permit others to be at peace with him. His heart is cankered; his soul is agitated; his mind is confused; his very countenance is distorted; his blood flows with increased velocity; his whole frame trembles: he has ceased to be a man; he is a tiger in human shape! A view of those, who are slaves to any of the animal appetites, and who yield to the cravings of these appetites without restraint, will illustrate the same doctrine, exhibit the same result, and show with equal conclusiveness, the importance of self-govern-For this purpose, look at the glutton, who pampers and indulges his appetite for food, without reason or judgment, "whose god is his belly!" How stupid; how inactive; how burthensome to himself. and how useless to society! He pampers the body, which is soon to become food for worms; but he starves the immortal soul, and robs it of its title to everlasting bliss.

Look, too, at the inebriate, and behold the effects of indulging an inordinate and ever-increasing appetite for intoxicating liquors. See how his mind is gradually weakened and deranged, his constitution under-

mined and broken, his estate wasted, his friends alienated, his family mortified and covered with shame, his neighbors disturbed and perplexed; and, what is most to be lamented, his sympathies wearing away, his heart growing hard, and his conscience becoming more and more stupid and insensible; till past moral feeling, or consumed by the fires of an inward fever, and shaken by the palsy of delirium tremens, he falls into the drunkard's grave and sinks to the drunkard's hell!

Look, I add, if you can bear the sight, at the debauchee, who has given himself up to "those lusts of the flesh, which war against the soul," who is restrained neither by reason, nor conscience, nor the word of God; who disregards the laws of God and man, the rules and decencies of society, and sometimes even the solemn and endearing vows of conjugal fidelity! How degrading; how awful, in every view of the subject, is his unholy and unbridled indulgence; pernicious to his health, destructive to his peace of mind, and fatal to his prospects of happiness here and hereafter; inflicting injury and entailing wretchedness on the victim of his criminal passion; bringing shame and disgrace into the whole circle of his friends; and throwing an influence abroad in society, full of mischief and misery; undermining domestic peace and social order, yielding nothing but jealousy, hatred and strife; and often producing agony and despair in the bosom of endeared friendship and confiding affection! But I forbear; the scene involved is too painful; the object presented to the imagination is too disgusting; the subject is too indelicate for particular description. In the judgment of an inspired apostle, it is a shame to speak, in public, of those things, which are wickedly done in secret; of the

abominations of the debauchee, the fornicator and adulterer. Their deeds are deeds of darkness; and their paths lead down to the chambers of death.

Look at these effects of passion unrestrained, and appetite uncontrolled; and then say, is not self-government important, indispensably important to personal happiness and the peace and order of society? Is it not important to the preservation of health and life? How frequent are the instances in which disease is contracted, the constitution broken down, health destroyed, and life brought to a premature close by the violent operation of passion, or the excessive and irregular indulgence of appetite! Is it not important to peace of mind? How many, for want of control over their passions and appetites, are all their life-time subject to spiritual bondage, and to the agonies of disappointed hope and a guilty conscience! Is it not important to usefulness in life? How many, by the indulgence of their perverse inclinations and depraved appetites, destroy the power and lose the inclination to do good in their day and generation! Rather, I should say, how many thus become a burthen and disgrace to their friends, covering them with shame; and a nuisance to society, filling it with discord and confusion! Is it not important, as a preparation for the pure joys and sublime employments of heaven? How can the voluptuary, the inebriate, the sensualist, the fiend of passion and the slave of appetite; how can the impure and the unholy, find admittance into that state of purity and peace and love, into which it is declared, by the voice of inspiration, "nothing unclean, neither that which defileth shall Indeed, an inspired apostle has most expressly decided this question, by naming among those, who shall never enter the kingdom of heaven, "fornicators, adulterers and drunkards." In poetic phrase, we add:

"Those holy gates forever har Pollution, sin and shame."

Let us now attempt, as was proposed, secondly, to prove that self-government is attainable. Though in some men as originally constituted, the passions are peculiarly strong and the appetites peculiarly craving; and though the ruling passions or the predominant appetite of a man, may have gathered strength by long indulgence; yet while the rational faculties and the moral powers remain, there is always a possibility of raising them to their rightful authority, and giving them the command over all the propensities of the man, however degraded in character and apparently lost to his friends and society.

I do not say that this self-government can be acquired without aid from on high. But this aid is freely offered, and will be surely granted to all who feel their need of it, and humbly and sincerely seek it; for "God has not said to any, seek ye my face in vain." Nor do I say, that even with this heavenly aid, self-government can be attained in the highest degree, at once; by a single effort of the mind. Sanctification is a progressive work, and therefore a work of time. bring every thought and feeling into subjection to the law of Christ, requires often a long course of discipline, subduing old habits, and breaking up old asso-Many who have long been engaged in this spiritual warfare, and who have made great progress in subduing "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life;" still find, that their warfare is not accomplished: still find themselves far from the high standard of perfection to which they are aspiring. Even the apostle to the Gentiles, that eminent servant of the Lord, when he wrote his epistle to the Philippians did not consider himself as perfect; but he found it still necessary, he said, to keep under his body, and to strive to bring it into subjection.

But we do say, that an habitual control over all the passions and appetites is attainable, and with the promised assistance of Heaven may be secured; I add, it is absolutely necessary to constitute a consistent Christian character, and to justify the indulgence of a Christian hope and a claim to the Christian name. While you suffer the strength of any evil propensity to remain unbroken, while you continue the habit of any unlawful indulgence, while you yield a willing obedience to any unholy desire, you cannot be a Christian, much less a consistent and happy Christian. not," said an inspired apostle, "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are, whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" He adds, by way of exhortation: "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof; neither vield ve your members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."

Let it not be supposed, however, that this self-government, even when understood to imply not absolute perfection, but merely an habitual control over our propensities, can be obtained without effort, without strenuous and continued effort. Solomon has wisely said: "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." It does, indeed, require more calculation, more resolution, more courage and more untiring energy and perseverance, to subdue our passions, regulate our appetites and establish complete self-government; than are necessary to carry on ex-

ternal warfare with success, to take a city or subjugate an empire. Especially is this acquisition difficult, and the highest efforts of Christian heroism are requisite, when self-government has been long lost, and self-control long neglected; when the passions have acquired strength, and the appetites become inflamed by long indulgence. "What a task!" I here use the language of another, "what a task! when we endeavor to prevent the return of ideas, which for many years our minds have revolved! What a task! to defend one's self from a passion, which knows all the avenues of the mind. and how to facilitate access by means of the body! What a task! to turn away from the flattering images and seducing importunities of concupiscence, long accustomed to gratification! What a task! when we are obliged to make the greatest efforts, in the weakest part of life, and to subdue an enemy whom we have been accustomed to consider as unconquerable, and whom we never durst attack, when he had no other arms than those which we chose to give him, and who has hitherto enjoyed no other advantages, but such as we thought proper to allow him! bor, such pain, such constraint," continues he, "must that man experience, who acquires the art of self-government, the habit of ruling his own spirit." Such labor, such pain, such constraint, I add, must be experienced by every consistent Christian; especially if he becomes a Christian and commences the work of reformation and self-discipline late in life: because all who become the real disciples of Christ, must deny themselves, take up the cross and follow him.

But notwithstanding the difficulty of self-government, it may be acquired. It may be acquired; for God has commanded us to make the acquisition, and promised the necessary aid. Yes, it may be acquired;

for it has been acquired by all who, through faith and patience, have gone to inherit the promises.

We come now, as was proposed, thirdly, by way of application, to suggest some rules to be observed and means to be used, in order to obtain self-government, and bring all our passions and appetites under the control of enlightened reason and a good conscience.

Before we make these suggestions, however, let it be premised, that all good rules and available means, presuppose established principle, a believing heart and a humble desire of bringing every thought and feeling into subjection to the will of God, according to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the exhortation in our text makes temperance subordinate to faith: "Add to your faith, temperance." faith, motives sufficiently powerful to resist temptation and stimulate to the mighty effort and secure the glorious conquest, would be wanting. We should in vain exhort the careless and unbelieving to strive and watch and pray against temptation. They would continue careless and disregard our exhortations; till, through faith, their hearts were impressed with the solemn importance of the object recommended. if they were at any time induced to make the effort, and commence the work of self-government, the effort would be feeble and the purpose languid; of course the work would soon cease and the labor be lost. those only who believe in God as their rightful sovereign. and in Jesus Christ as the only mediator, by whom they can obtain reconciliation and redemption, who believe, moreover, that "the lusts of the flesh war against the soul," and that the works of the flesh lead to wretchedness and woe, can we, with any hope of success, suggest rules for self-government, and exhort them "to mortify their members which are upon the

- earth." Without this faith, men will neither make the requisite effort, nor seek the necessary aid, to gain the conquest over the passions and appetites, and establish the authority of reason and conscience. For the consideration of believers, therefore, the following rules and motives are suggested.
- 1. Let your efforts embrace all your passions, appetites and propensities, whether natural or acquired. All should be alike subject to the authority of the higher powers of the soul. Besides, all attempts to obtain a partial control over "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life," will prove unsuccessful and vain. Self-indulgence in one particular, is like the letting out of water through some single crevice in the embankment; the whole barrier will soon be swept away. The uncontrolled passion or appetite will break down the authority of self-government, and produce anarchy and derangement through the whole Here the declaration of the apostle James applies with peculiar force: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." Whosoever attempts to restrain one evil propensity, while he indulges another, will lose the benefit of self-government, and soon find himself a slave to passion and appetite, under the dominion of sin, bound in chains of darkness and condemned to wretchedness and woe. Wherefore set up your claims to the whole empire of the soul. Declare war against every enemy within and without. And strive to bring into subjection every rebellious feeling and every wandering desire.
- 2. Consider, carefully consider, what is your ruling passion, your master appetite, your easily besetting sin; and set a double guard where your greatest danger lies. Are you constitutionally subject to anger

and violent fits of resentment? Watch against temptation, and check the first risings of passion. Avoid the occasions of excitement and give no provocation to injury. Think, and if possible pray, before you speak in reply to the language of reproach. "Leave off contention before it be meddled with." Remember, that "a soft answer turneth away wrath;" the very mildness of the tones of voice will subdue the angry spirit, both of him who hears and of him who speaks.

Have you a constitutional propensity to licentiousness, or have you acquired an inordinate thirst for intoxicating liquors? Avoid the places and the occasions which furnish the means of gratification. Let fasting and prayer, and the pledge of entire abstinence be resorted to, as the only sure remedy of the disease.

Are you naturally inclined to pride and vanity? Watch carefully the insidious movements of these enemies of the soul. Think not more highly of yourself than you ought to think. Meditate on your imperfections. Esteem others better than yourself. Compare yourself, not with the vile and base, but with the excellent of the earth; and thus strive to mortify your pride and subdue the vanity of your heart. Whatever passion or appetite has the ascendancy in your breast, to whatever sin you find the strongest inclination, whatever propensity to evil most frequently and most powerfully arises in your bosom, at whatever point you feel most exposed to danger; there direct your chief attention, there rouse all your courage, there summon all your energies, and exert all your strength.

3. Avoid temptation. This is our third rule; and it is scarcely less important than the first and second. Indeed so important is it and so intimately connected with them, that we have been obliged to anticipate its application; so important, that it is indispensable in a

system of moral discipline and self-government. How often does the prudent general gain a final victory, by avoiding a hasty engagement, by skilfully manœuvering, till he has collected all his forces; by marches and countermarches, till he has exhausted the resources, and weakened the strength of his enemy? So a passion or appetite, which with its present strength might overcome your reason and lead you captive, may be weakened by privation, by withholding from it the means of gratification; and thus by avoiding temptation, you may finally bring it into complete subjec-"The best advice," says a profound moral philosopher, "which can be given to a man, whose constitution inclines him to a particular sin, is that he avoid opportunities of indulgence, and flee from such objects as excite his ruling passion. It does not depend on you," he adds, "to be unconcerned in sight of an object fatal to your innocence; but it does depend on you, generally, to keep out of its sight, and beyond its reach." Let us not be presumptuous. Let us distrust our own strength. Let us not forget Peter's presumption and consequent fall. Let us learn wisdom from the apocryphal maxim: "He that loveth danger, shall perish therein." Let us avoid the company, forsake the places, and even discontinue the business, by which we find ourselves peculiarly exposed to temptation and sin.

4. But since all temptation cannot be avoided, while we continue in the flesh and live in the world, a fourth rule becomes necessary: "Watch and pray." Whenever you are unavoidably exposed to temptation, seek divine assistance, that you may be able to resist the tempter and overcome the world. Remember your weakness and dependence; and fail not to secure that grace, which is freely offered and never

withheld from those who seek it with all their hearts. Before you enter upon a pursuit or go to a place, where you have reason to apprehend danger, visit your closet and put on the whole armor of God. Thus, and thus only, can you securely meet the dangers and pass through the trials of life. Thus, and thus only, can you maintain a due control over all your passions and appetites, and come off conquerors over all your spiritual enemies.

5. Finally, I remark, on this subject, that every man may become his own teacher, learn from experience, and lay down rules adapted to his own case. Let every one, therefore, study his own character, prepare for his own trials, and with diligence keep his own heart, out of which are the issues of life. And may He, who is able to keep us from falling, finally present us faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.

— Amen.

# LECTURE VII.

### CHRISTIAN PATIENCE.

#### 9 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS EMOTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

Those who have read the Bible attentively, must have observed, that the passive virtues are much more frequently inculcated than the active. The reason of this is perfectly obvious. For although a mere abstinence from positive acts of wickedness, is far from constituting the whole, or even the most prominent part, of the Christian character; yet it is, by no means, the least difficult part to maintain. Activity is natural to man, is indeed essential to his animal existence. His passions, his appetites, his native sympathies, all his feelings good and bad, propel him to action. If, therefore, his evil propensities are restrained, his affections sanctified, and his desires directed to proper objects, he will, of course, act habitually right.

Besides, it is the principal business of active benevolence, to repair the injuries and diminish the sufferings, which avarice and ambition, pride and malice, licentiousness and intemperance, have occasioned in the world. Let the evils, which proceed from irregular passions and unbridled appetites, be effectually prevented; and more than half the work of love, the labor of charity, will be accomplished at once. Hence the propriety of beginning the work of reformation by abstaining from evil, and purifying the fountain from which it flows. Hence, too, the reason, why Christianity so frequently and so earnestly recommends the graces of humility, contentment, meekness, forbearance, forgiveness and resignation. Hence, we may add, the importance of those precepts which enjoin the passive virtues, to all who would aspire to the Christian character and enjoy the consolations and hopes of the gospel.

Patience, the subject suggested by that portion of our text, which we come in course to consider to-day, belongs to the class of passive virtues: "Add to your faith—patience." In discoursing on this subject, I shall attempt,

I. To give a description of Christian patience;

II. To show its importance in this world of trials and disappointments; and,

III. To point out the foundation upon which it must be built, and the means by which it may be established and improved.

L Patience, according to the general acceptation of the term, denotes a quiet and calm temper of mind, under the suffering of some present evil, or the delay of some expected good. Christian patience, in particular, includes that peculiar serenity of mind, under these trials, which arises from a deep conviction and a clear apprehension of the universality, wisdom and benevolence of the divine government, in connection with a firm reliance on the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the gospel, to them that believe its doctrines and obey its precepts.

In order, however, to obtain a clear and definite

view of Christian patience, it is necessary to contrast it with the temper of mind to which it stands opposed, to distinguish it from that insensibility with which it is sometimes confounded, and to compare it with other Christian graces, which it most nearly resembles.

1. Let it be observed, then, that patience stands opposed to peevishness, or anxiety, or a restless spirit. The impatient man suffers every disappointment to discompose his mind; and hence he becomes fickle and irresolute, often changing his purpose, or sinking into a state of inactivity. Does he experience present he forgets that it may be connected with an ultimate good. In the tumult of his thoughts, and the agitation of his feelings, he loses all self-possession and complains of his hard lot, hastily concludes and rashly declares, with one of old: "All these things are against me." Does he hope for some future good? He is made wretched by the very expectation. The intervening time and space, between him and the object of his desire, are magnified in his view. every day becomes a year and every year an age. Hope deferred makes his heart sick. The operation of legitimate causes is too slow, and the use of honest means too inefficient, to satisfy his impatient mind. The consequence is that he either sinks into a state of inactivity and despair, or suddenly changes the object of his pursuit; or what is worse still, forgetting the prudent counsel of Solomon, and making haste to seize the prize by unlawful means, he ceases to be in-How many instances of both these unhappy results of impatience, may be found in the history of pecuniary speculation and political ambition!

But while the unprincipled are made wretched by their own impatience; the real Christian, relying with confidence on the wisdom and benevolence of the di-

vine government, possesses his soul in patience, and endures, without a murmur, the trials and privations which he cannot avoid. He does not indeed cease Nor can he become insensible to pain and affliction. But reflecting on the great design of all chastening, under the divine government; looking with an eye of faith at the end of his corrections; and imbibing the strong consolations, which flow from the promises of the gospel; he remains calm and serene, and waits patiently, till relief can be innocently obtained. So likewise the positive good, which he desires and expects, he can patiently wait for till the proper time, the appointed time, comes. What he desires, indeed, he continually seeks. But he seeks it, not by unlawful means and with selfish motives; but in the course of duty, in a manner consistent with the dictates of benevolence, according to the precepts of the gospel of Christ, and with the motives which the spirit of the gospel inspires. Thus he continues patient in the ways of well doing.

2. We proceed to show, wherein Christian patience is distinguished from that natural or acquired insensibility with which it is sometimes confounded, and for which it is often mistaken. You have seen, perhaps, in the midst of the heaviest calamities, a fixed stupidity, a sullen silence, an obstinate reserve, or it may be a pretended indifference, and even an affected merriment. All this, and more than this, may be seen, where there is no Christian patience. For, however these appearances may, in some respects, resemble patience, they are entirely destitute of its distinguishing characteristics. Patience, Christian patience, as we said before, does not render us indifferent to our situation and prospects, nor insensible to pain and affliction. It allows us to feel a present evil, and de-

sire its removal; but it enables us to bear it without murmuring, while we seek to remove it by all proper means. It permits us to contemplate and pursue an expected good; but it disposes us, in all our efforts, to keep within the bounds of prescribed rules and proper means, and even prepares us for unavoidable disappointment. In the words of another, I add: "Christian patience is a disposition, that keeps us calm and composed in our frame of mind, and steady in the practice of duty, under a sense of our afflictions, or in the delay of our hopes."

3. We observe, further, that Christian patience very nearly resembles contentment, meekness, and resignation. It includes, indeed, something in common with each of these Christian graces; and yet it is distinguished from them all by circumstances peculiar to itself; or rather, perhaps, I should say it is a generic term, comprehending the other three, as specific terms.

Contentment, for instance, respects merely our present condition, and implies a complete satisfaction with it. Whereas patience regards the future, as well as the present; and renders us calm and serene in a situation, which we still wish and hope, in due time, to change or improve.

Meekness too, like patience, implies a calmness of mind and serenity of spirit; but its exercises are limited to peculiar objects, under peculiar circumstances. It regards chiefly the injuries which we receive from our fellow men. It partakes more of the nature of benevolence, than of self-control, or personal complacency. It is directly opposed to anger; and it enables those who possess it, in a high degree, to bear reproach and suffer injury, without seeking revenge, or indulging feelings of malice. When reviled, it reviles not again. When insulted, it threatens not. It re-

turns blessing for cursing, and labors to overcome evil with good. Whereas patience, though it regards all classes of sufferings and disappointments, as well as injuries received directly from the hand of man, is still confined to the manner of bearing these evils, without reference to the instruments, by which they are brought upon us.

Resignation, likewise, resembles patience, and, as I intimated before, is a species—a modification of the same general principle. But it is a peculiar exercise of this Christian temper. It approaches nearer to the region of godliness, than to that of temperance and self-government. It keeps the Author of all our mercies and all our judgments more directly in view than It regards the will of contentment and meekness. Heaven, rather than the effects of that will on our present and future condition. Thus, as I said before, patience is a generic term, comprehending the three classes of Christian graces, denoted by the specific terms contentment, meekness and submission. With these discriminating observations before us, I repeat, in substance, the general definition of patience, already given. It is a self-possession; resulting from correct views of divine government: and producing calmness of mind. serenity of spirit, and mildness and equanimity of temper; even while we are suffering positive evil, or are kept from the enjoyment of expected good.

II. The way is now prepared, as was proposed, to show the importance of patience to Christians, while they abide in the flesh, while they are pursuing their pilgrimage in this world of trials and disappointments. I might show its importance and necessity, as a constituent and prominent part of Christian character, from the frequency and urgent manner in which it is enjoined in the Scriptures. It is inculcated in oft-re-

peated precepts by the inspired writers. It is expressly named among the fruits of the Spirit. It is illustrated and enforced by the example of holy men, and even by a divine pattern. You have heard of the patience of Job. You have seen the patience of the saints. You have been told of the patience and forbearance of Him, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter; and who voluntarily suffered and died, the just for the unjust. You have found the Lord and Maker of all things long suffering, and even styling himself "the God of patience." In addition to all this, I might refer to the declaration of an inspired apostle, implying the absolute necessity of patience to all Christians while on earth: "Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise."

But without pursuing further these considerations, which must occur to your minds, whenever you search the Scriptures or meditate on their instructions, I shall endeavor to show the importance of patience to Christians; and enforce the exhortation to "add to faith—patience," by bringing to view the trials of life, which render it necessary; and by pointing out some of the occasions which call for its exercise and require its support.

The life of a Christian is a pilgrimage. In this world he is not at home. He has here no continuing city, no permanent rest. Changes continually await him. Pains and afflictions are frequently his portion. His expectations are often disappointed, and his hopes frustrated. Like other men, he is subject to disappointments and all the common calamities of life; and in addition to those trials, which are common to all, he has many which are peculiar to him as a Christian, many which arise from his tenderness of conscience,

and enlightened and elevated views of truth and duty. from his benevolent concern for the salvation of others. as well as from the various self-denials which he is called to practise; and above all, from that opposition, reproach and persecution, which an inspired apostle has predicted: "All they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer." A Christian without patience. therefore, (were it possible for a man to be a Christian without a portion of this grace,) would be of all men most miserable. And in proportion to the measure in which this temper of mind is cultivated and possessed by any one, will ordinarily be his personal happiness and active usefulness. Some, it must be admitted, have greater trials than others. But no Christian, in this state of probation, is entirely exempt from them; nor, indeed, is it desirable that any should be; for it is good for all sometimes to be in affliction; because affliction worketh out for them the peaceable fruits of righteousness: "Tribulation," saith the Scripture, "worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed."

Who is there among us that has not, in some season of trial and suffering, either experienced the benefit, or felt the want, of patience? If you have been poor, if all your industry and prudence have failed to relieve you from embarrassment, if your daily wants have with difficulty been supplied, you have surely found much need of patience, to keep you from repining, to restrain you from dishonesty and deception on the one hand, or despair and idleness on the other, to enable you with equanimity and firmness to bear your trials and persevere in the path of duty. If you have been called to suffer reproach, if your conduct has been misrepresented and your motives of action mistaken, if you have been made the song of the

drunkard and the by-word of the profane scoffer, then too have you had need of patience, to possess your souls in quietude, to maintain your integrity, to proceed cheerfully and steadily in the course marked out for you by the finger of Heaven. If you have been brought into circumstances of affliction, disappointment or trial of any kind, you have unquestionably found support in the exercise of Christian patience; or, destitute of this heavenly grace, you have been left without support, peevish, repining, unhappy yourself, and rendering all unhappy about you.

"Perhaps you have formed plans of happiness and schemes of extensive benevolence; but the benefit of your intentions and the effect of your exertions, it may be, are yet scarcely to be discovered; you have. for aught that yet appears, labored in vain and spent your strength for naught." With the desire of seeing better times, and promoting the prosperity of your country, you may have been seeking out the faithful of the land for rulers, and praying for all in authority, beseeching Him who setteth up one and putteth down another, to overrule and direct the counsels of the nation; but the desire of your heart, it may be, is still withheld, all things remain as they were; no relief comes, and darkness still broods over the prospect. You may have been long laboring and praying for an increase of pure and undefiled religion, a reformation in the religious sentiments and moral habits of the community, a revival in the church of Christ and "a flocking of souls unto Jesus;" but hitherto, it may be, nothing but disappointment has followed all your labors and prayers; you perceive no essential change; vice and iniquity, licentiousness and error, still abound; the church is still asleep, and sinners are still impenitent and perishing. Or with enlarged views and pur-

poses and hopes, you may have been studying the prophets, watching the signs of the times and the flight of the missionary angel, and looking earnestly for the approach of the predicted millennium; but your signs, it may be, have failed, and your calculations proved fallacious; the world still lieth in wickedness, and gross darkness covereth the people. Or, tired of life and its vain pursuits, oppressed with the infirmities of age, and, in your own humble view, useless to society and a burthen to your friends, established in faith and possessing a sure hope of a blessed immortality, you may have long wished to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest; and yet wearisome days and nights are still appointed unto you; and the chariot-wheels of your Master seem to be slow in their movements, and your expected deliverance, to be long delayed.

Now in all these cases, "the patience of the saints" is necessary to preserve the serenity of your mind and the composure of your spirits. In all these cases, you are in danger of repining under the disappointment, or sinking into a state of despair. In all these cases, therefore, it becomes you to follow after patience, and beseech the Lord to direct your hearts into the patience of Christ, that your integrity and confidence may remain unshaken, that you may be kept from despondency and complaint, that in patience you may possess your soul. "Take, therefore, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord. for an example of suffering affliction and of patience." "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." "For one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promises; but is long suffering to usward;" he will not too long delay; he will fulfil all his promises, and accomplish all his purposes of mercy in their time.

III. We come now, as was proposed, to point out the foundation, on which Christian patience must be built, and the means by which it may be improved. And this will constitute the application of the subject.

It is, however, little more than a repetition of our text, to observe that this Christian grace, like all others. must rest for support on Christian faith. Where there is no confidence in the authority of the Scriptures, no reliance on the testimony of God, no faith in the atonement and mediation of Christ, we should in vain attempt to enforce the exhortation, to cultivate and exercise patience. Patience, wherever it exists, as a part of the Christian temper, must be added to faith. For faith, as we observed in a preceding lecture, is among the Christian graces, what the key-stone is to the arch; it sustains the whole. If, therefore, you would enjoy the serenity and equanimity of a patient mind, you must possess, cherish, and exercise Christian faith; and to this end you must attend to the evidences of Christian truth, and open your heart to receive the truth in the love of it. If you would possess your soul in patience, your faith must be steadfast and unwavering. The foundation must be laid deep and strong, or the superstructure cannot be raised to its proper height.

But that patience may have its perfect work in us, we must not only see that it is added to faith, but we must diligently use all proper means for its improvement. These in general, comprehend all the common means of grace. It would, however, have a peculiar tendency to increase our patience, to meditate often on the extent of the divine government, in con-

nection with the divine promises. The more frequently we contemplate the fact, that every creature and every event, even to the falling of a sparrow, are under the direction of Heaven; and the more fully and habitually we feel the persuasion, that all things will thus conspire to promote the final happiness of those who love God, the better surely shall we be prepared to bear affliction and meet disappointments with patience and submission.

Let it never be forgotten, however, that such meditations should always be accompanied with prayer. "If any man lack wisdom," says an apostle, "let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Our meditations on the divine character and government will never produce a calm, humble and patient mind, without the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit; and these come in answer to prayer. It is prayer that gives a right direction to our thoughts, a proper cast to our temper; while it pleads the promises of the Father, relies on the mediation of the Son, and secures the aid of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore pray for patience. As often as you find your heart inclined to distrust the goodness of God, and disposed to murmur at the allotments of his providence; as often as you discover a restless spirit, or a peevish temper, springing up in your bosom, so often retire from the world and pray, humbly and earnestly pray for grace, and devoutly beseech the Lord to direct your heart into the patience of Christ.

Finally; let those who have neither patience, nor that faith on which alone it can be built, consider its importance to their present peace and future happiness; and be led to the inquiry, what they must do to be saved. And let those who now possess a portion

of this sanctified and sanctifying principle, endeavor to increase and improve it, by every method in their power; and exercise it on every occasion of trial. Let them learn patience of the husbandman, who labors and toils and waits long for the fruits of earth. Let them strive to acquire the patience of the saints; following them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Let them especially imitate the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great pattern of patience, who meekly endured the contradiction of sinners; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

## LECTURE VIII.

### CHRISTIAN PIETY.

#### 2 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE FATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

Ir cannot be too deeply impressed on our minds, that the various exercises of heart and habits of life. which constitute the Christian character, all spring from the same fundamental principle, and terminate in one grand result; all spring from faith and terminate in love. For the moment we forget this primary maxim of the gospel, we are exposed to one of two practical errors; we are liable to self-deception on the one hand, or uncharitable judgment on the other. Let a man forget, or in his examinations of himself neglect, the consideration, that Christian faith is the great principle of the divine life in the soul, that men are justified and saved by faith alone, that faith is inseparable from genuine repentance, and essential to true obedience, that it is the foundation of holiness. and therefore a necessary qualification for heaven; let a man, I say, forget or neglect this consideration, and he will be exposed to self-deception, and liable to indulge false hopes; he will be in danger of resting satisfied with the mere form of godliness without the

power thereof; he will be ready to speak peace to his soul, merely because he goes through the ceremony of external duty, or simply because he finds himself free from those public crimes and gross iniquities, which even the maxims of the world condemn. On the other hand, let him disregard the tendency and overlook the genuine fruits of this essential Christian principle; let him forget, that saving faith always "works by love," that the production of the greatest good and the highest ultimate felicity, is the leading object of the plans and exertions of real Christians; and he will, of course, misconstrue their conduct, and mistake their motives in a thousand instances, where they are compelled to discharge an unpleasant duty, and to apply a salutary corrective. Yes, he will judge without candor and condemn without mercy.

But, notwithstanding this union of the Christian graces and virtues, both in principle and result, they are capable of distinct contemplation and individual inculcation. Convenience likewise requires, and the Scriptures authorize us, to class them under distinct general heads; and exhibit and inculcate them according to such classification. Hence all those good purposes and actions, which relate more immediately to ourselves, have been called duties of temperance, or "duties to ourselves:" those feelings and acts, which directly promote the happiness of mankind, have been denominated, duties of benevolence, or "duties to others;" and those exercises and acts of worship, which have the Supreme Being for their immediate object, have been styled duties of piety, or "duties to God." The term godkness in our text, which is to furnish the subject of this discourse, properly denotes the class of duties last named. The original word strictly signifies religious worship, or devotion to God; and these phrases,

you know, comprehend, not only external acts of submission, but inward feelings of reverence, love and confidence. A single quotation from the Scriptures will be sufficient to justify the definition we have given, and illustrate the distinction we have endeavored to make. Thus in the second chapter of the epistle to Titus, it is written: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." Here the three classes of duties, which we have before named, the three great branches of Christian character, are distinctly brought to view, by the three qualifying terms, soberly, righteously and godly.

Sobriety includes all the duties which relate to self-government, or what we denominate the duties of temperance. Righteousness comprehends all the duties which arise from our relation to our fellow-men, or what we denominate the duties of benevolence. And godliness, as we said before, embraces all the duties of religious worship, or what we denominate the duties of piety. When, therefore, the apostle, in our text, exhorts Christians, "to add to their faith—godliness," he in effect exhorts them to cultivate a spirit of piety, and perform appropriate acts of religious worship. Thus our subject naturally divides itself into two parts. Let us then in accordance with this division, inquire;

- I. What feelings a Christian should cherish and exercise toward God? And,
- II. What are the proper manifestations and expressions of these feelings of piety?
- 1. Under the first general head of discourse, I remark, that one of these feelings is reverence of the Supreme Being. This is indeed an important branch of

godliness, a prominent feature of piety. It is the very first exercise of a Christian toward God. "The fear of the Lord," in the language of Scripture, "is the beginning of wisdom." So important is this sentiment to constitute true piety, that there is, perhaps, no phrase more frequently used in the Scriptures, to denote a pious man, than that of "the fear of the Lord:" and none by which impiety is so often designated, as the negative of this very expression, a destitution of the fear of the Lord. Reverence or filial fear, a dread of the displeasure of a holy and sovereign God, a fear of offending a glorious Creator, a kind Preserver, a bountiful Benefactor, is indeed a most rational feeling, and a most efficient principle of holy action. It is a sentiment becoming not only imperfect saints on earth, but angels and the spirits of just men made perfect in "A reverential fear of God," says one, "is a temper, arising from an apprehension of his majesty and supreme excellency, as Job intimates: 'Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon vou?" It proceeds from a view of the infinite distance between him and us; not only as 'he is in heaven and we upon earth,' but because we and 'all nations before him are as nothing, and counted to him as less than nothing and vanity.' It is founded in his absolute superiority over us and our entire dependence on him, as he is the Creator and we the creatures of his power, as he is the Giver of every good and perfect gift and we the pensioners on his bounty, as he is the Shepherd and we the sheep of his pasture. It results from all the various relations in which we stand to him, as children of his family, as servants of his house, as subjects of his government. 'A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if I be a father, where is my honor? and if I be a master, where

is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts?" "Who," asks a prophet, "who would not fear thee, O thou king of nations?"

But, as all these relations between us and our God are infinitely more interesting and important, than the corresponding relations on earth; so should our reverence for him rise infinitely above our highest regard for human connections and finite authority. Do the hosts of heaven surround the throne of God with reverence? Are the seraphim represented as "covering their faces with their wings," and saying one to another, "holy, holy is the Lord of hosts?" Do those, who according to their measure are perfect in holiness and happy in heaven, sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, saving, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints: who shall not fear thee. O Lord. and glorify thy name; for thou art holy?" Is it true, my hearers, that the purest created intelligences thus adore the infinitely holy Jehovah with profound reverence; and shall not we come before him with reverence and godly fear? Can there, indeed, be any piety in fallen man, while he casts off the fear of the Lord?

It must be admitted, however, that between this fear in sinful man and that which exists in holy angels and glorified spirits, there must of necessity be a wide difference. For in them there can be no fear of his wrath, no apprehension of being cast off from his favor and banished from the presence of his glory. Their state is fixed; their eternal felicity is sure; in them perfect love excludes all servile fear, all apprehensions of danger, all considerations of terror. But who on the earth has reached this condition of angels, this state of sinless perfection and complete holiness? Who among us is authorized to dismiss all anxiety,

lest after all his hopes, he should himself become a cast-away? Although imperfection attaches to the reverence of saints on earth, as well as to every other sentiment and feeling of their hearts; still is reverential fear necessary to the very existence of piety; and in proportion to their increase of grace and advancement in holiness, will be the purity and depth of their reverence for the Majesty of heaven and earth. In the same degree, we may add, will they strive with watchfulness and solicitude, to avoid every approach to irreverence, in thought, word and deed.

2. Love to God is another essential part of piety. This, therefore, denotes one of the feelings included under the general term godliness. So important, indeed, is supreme love to God in the Christian system, that the precept by which it is enjoined, is denominated "the first and great commandment:" "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment."

But what, it may be asked, is love to God? and how may we be able to determine whether we truly love him? In answer to these inquiries, let it be observed, that love is an affection of the heart, implying attachment, confidence and esteem, in proportion to the worthiness of the object beloved. The love of God, therefore, wherever it exists, must of necessity be a supreme love. It admits of no rival: "If any man love the world," saith an apostle, "the love of the Father is not in him." The infinite perfections and unparalleled amiableness of the object must render this superior to all other affections, paramount to all other attachments. It will, wherever it exists, regulate our regard to all other beings. It will control all other feelings and principles of action. It is a flame, which

waters cannot quench. It is a current, which mountains cannot stop. It is a chain, which the powers of earth and hell cannot break; "it is stronger than death." "Neither death nor life," said an apostle, "nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come; nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Let it not be supposed, however, that the operations of this supreme Christian affection are precisely the same in all Christians, nor equally perceptible in the same person at all times. The principle, indeed, is the same, in all who possess it, under all circumstances in which they can be placed; but the operations of it vary, according to the various temperaments of mind and the peculiar vicissitudes of life. it may glow with rapture and burst forth into ecstasy of joy; in another, it may never rise above a feeling of calm delight, nor produce in its operations anything more, than cheerful serenity of temper and sweet complacency of mind. In the same person, at different times and under different circumstances, it may consist in different exercises: sometimes in the exercise of calm submission, sometimes of confident hope, sometimes of ardent desire, sometimes of devout gratitude.

But notwithstanding this variety in the experience of different Christians, and even in the feelings of the same person, at different times, the leading features of love to God are always the same; and its essential properties, upon investigation, may always be discovered in the heart, where it dwells. For it always includes complacency in the contemplation of the divine character, reconciliation to the divine will, submission to the divine authority, and regard to the divine glory.

In order, therefore, to learn, whether we do, indeed, love God, it is not necessary, that we should compare ourselves with others, nor even with ourselves at different periods. The peculiarities of this love, which result from peculiar temperaments of mind, or which depend on peculiar circumstances of situation in life, we may leave out of the account. But we must inquire, whether we possess the essential ingredients, the common properties, the universal characteristics, of this affection.

Let it be remembered, then, that if you truly love God, you will love his whole character; you will be pleased with all his attributes; you will contemplate his holiness, justice and goodness, with approbation; you will esteem him not for any particular attribute, viewed alone and made to conceal the rest; but for the glory and excellency of the whole, viewed together. as they exist and are displayed in harmony. Let it be remembered, too, that if you love God, you will feel reconciled to his will, in all things and under all circumstances; you will acquiesce, without murmuring, in the dispensations of his providence; you will bear, with patience, the corrections of his hand; you will rejoice in his government; you will say, with truth and sincerity, "not my will, but thine, O Father in heaven, be done." Let it be remembered, likewise. that if you love God, you will love his service, and be submissive to his authority; you will consent unto his law, that it is holy, just and good; you will esteem all his precepts, concerning all things, to be right; you will not reject the counsel of God in a single doctrine taught in his word, nor wish to have one of his commands cancelled; you will receive with meekness the ingrafted word, and yield a cheerful obedience to all his requisitions. Let it be remembered, finally, that if you love God, you will regard his glory. In all your plans of life, in all your secular employments, in your various pursuits and habitual deportment, this regard will furnish your leading motives, your governing principle, the ultimate object of your desires; "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do," you will habitually strive to "do all to the glory of God."

3. I might add, that gratitude for divine favors is another essential branch of piety. But this is, in reality, included in the general idea of love to God. It is, indeed, nothing more than a peculiar exercise, though a very important exercise, of that affection. It is loving him, who first loved us because he first loved us. So numerous are the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which we are continually receiving from our heavenly Father; so completely are we dependent on his goodness for all our enjoyments in this life, and on his mercy for all our hopes of felicity in a future state, that an ingenuous mind connected with a renewed heart cannot fail to view this manifold goodness with feelings of gratitude to him, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift. If our hearts, through grace, have become susceptible of holy emotion, we cannot but exercise gratitude to Him who gave us existence, and hath sustained us in life; who hath prepared for us a habitation, and loaded us with benefits; who hath even sent his Son to redeem us from sin, and save us from everlasting destruction; the riches of whose grace are beyond estimation, and the extent of whose love to us is without a parallel, even "passing knowledge." The time allotted to this discourse, however, will not permit us to pursue this branch of our subject. Let us proceed, therefore, as was proposed,

II. To consider, very briefly, what are the proper

manifestations and expressions of these feelings and sentiments of piety.

1. The first and most appropriate expression of pious sentiment, I remark, is religious worship. Those who truly love and fear God, will statedly perform the various acts of devotion, which he has prescribed. They will pray unto him, and praise his name. adore his perfections, confess their sins before him, and render thanks unto him for all his benefits. They will enter into their closets, and pray to their Father, who seeth in secret. Nor will they forsake the assembling of themselves together, at the appointed seasons for social worship. These external acts of devotion, it must be admitted, may all be imitated, at least occasionally and to a certain extent, by the hypocrite; and when they are performed without corresponding sentiments and feelings, they are mere formality and solemn mockery. Still they are essential to the advancement, and even to the existence of pious sentiment. You may have the form of godliness without the power; but you cannot have the power without the form. Without some form, some mode of manifestation, some outward expression, the inward grace cannot exist, much less glow in the bosom. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth will speak. The pious soul will pray. Love will produce praise; adoration will flow from reverence; and gratitude will utter itself in strains of thanksgiving. He, who feels the sentiments of piety, will give vent to his feelings by frequent, by stated, by habitual acts of devotion. It is not, therefore, a want of candor and charity, which compels us to say, that those who voluntarily forsake the house of God, the family altar and the closet of devotion, are destitute of piety, and are altogether unprepared for the exercises and enjoyments of heaven.

A truly pious man willingly and cheerfully obeys the precepts, which enjoin the duties of devotion. Indeed, he scarcely needs the authority of a command, to induce him to worship God. He loves the service. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his Heavenly Father. To him praise is comely and prayer is pleasant. He remembers the Sabbath to keep it holy; and to him the Sabbath is a delight. He is glad when the returning, consecrated season invites him to his closet, to the family altar, or to the house of God. To every prescribed act of devotion, whether secret or public, private or social, he faithfully and cheerfully attends; and he desires and even rejoices to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord.

2. But direct acts of devotion and habitual attendance on the prescribed ordinances of religious worship, are not the only appropriate expressions of piety. It may be expressed, likewise, by uniform obedience to the will of God in all the duties of social life; or rather this mode of expressing pious sentiment, is always connected with direct acts of worship, where the heart is right and the worship sincere. "If ve love me," said our Saviour to his disciples, "ye will keep my words; and an inspired apostle has added: "this is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments." Indeed, without this habitual obedience to the express commands of Heaven, without a general consistency of deportment in our daily conversation, occasional acts of worship afford no substantial proof of genuine piety.

We may subjoin, finally, that sentiments of piety may be expressed by voluntary exertions to promote the cause of truth and righteousness; by efforts to spread the gospel, to reclaim sinners, to advance the Redeemer's kingdom and the glory of God. Indeed, without participating in the benevolent operations of the day, a man can hardly be considered a pious man; much less can he grow in grace and maintain an elevated Christian character.

In reviewing our subject, and applying it to ourselves, we shall naturally be led to the following inquiries:

- 1. Do we reverence the Lord Jehovah? Do we fear to sin against him? Is the fear of the Lord ever before our eyes? Does "his excellency make us afraid;" and do we come before his presence with humility, reverence and godly fear? Or are we of the number of those who cast off the fear of the Lord, and restrain prayer: who live without God in the world, and disregard his rightful authority; who say, at least practically and with impious boldness: "Who is the Almighty, that we should fear him; and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?" O, how many are speaking peace to their souls; while there is no peace for them! How many are contending with the Almighty; lifting their feeble arm against the heavens, and even "running upon the thick bosses of his buckler!" O, let not my soul be gathered with such! Let none of us, my hearers, thus seek our own destruction in continued rebellion against God! Let us not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful!
- 2. Do we love the Lord our God with all the heart, with all the mind, and with all the strength? Is our attachment to him and his service more powerful than all other attachments? Is there no rival to him in our affections? Is this love stronger than death? Can nothing separate us from the love of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord? We need not ask for strength of emotion and high degrees of ardor. We need not

inquire for peculiar frames of feeling, resulting from the excitement of peculiar temperaments and special occasions. All these may be well in their place; and they serve to diversify Christian experience; but they furnish not the best, much less the only criterion of Christian character. But the love of God, which all Christians must possess, is a principle rather than an emotion; a principle of confidence and holy attachment; it is an enduring sentiment, rather than a temporary feeling; it is a steady, absorbing, controlling affection. Let us, then, see, that a love such as this, has found a lodgment in our bosoms; and let us not be satisfied with anything which possesses not these high characteristics.

- 3. Are we grateful to God for all his blessings, for creating goodness, preserving mercy and redeeming grace? Do we love him who first loved us? Does the love of Christ constrain us? Are we deeply affected and suitably influenced by a view of the wondrous love and infinite mercy of God, in Jesus Christ our Lord?
- 4. Do we express these sentiments of piety by appropriate acts of private and social worship, by a devout and regular attendance on all the ordinances of the gospel, by habitual obedience to the divine will, by embracing every opportunity and using all our influence to glorify God, in advancing the cause of truth and righteousness and felicity among men?

These inquiries, my hearers, are important for us all. If made with earnestness and sincerity, and faithfully applied to ourselves, they will lead to self-knowledge. And who would not wish to know himself; and learn what spirit he is of? Who can desire to remain ignorant of his own character and state and prospects? Who, indeed, is so hardened in sin, so

reckless of consequences, and indifferent to his own happiness and future destiny, as never to feel the solicitude expressed by the Christian poet:

> Tis a point I long to know, Oft it causes anxious thought, Do I love the Lord or no? Am I his, or am I not?

If, then, you wish to know your own character and state, and learn whether you possess the spirit of god-liness and genuine piety, enter seriously on this course of inquiry, and subject yourself to rigid examination. Consider your ways. Examine your hearts. Ascertain whether the fear of God is before your eyes; and the love of God shed abroad in your hearts.

In conclusion, I add; let all who have hitherto lived without God in the world, and regardless of his authority, repent and return unto him with all their hearts. Let them remember, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and let them no longer listen to the instruction, which causeth to err, nor yield to the stupifying suggestions of the great adversary of God and man. And let those who possess a spirit of piety, cultivate and cherish this spirit. Stir up, my brethren, the gift that is in you. Improve the means of grace within your reach. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith-godliness." Denying ungodliness and every worldly lust, live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world; looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame; and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God; where may we all finally meet, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.-AMEN.

# LECTURE IX.

### BROTHERLY KINDNESS.

#### 2 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

By a very natural and obvious figure of speech, the term brethren, which in its primitive signification denotes the relation between children of the same parents, has been used to designate any intimate and endearing connection among men. Hence persons of the same profession and employment in life, of the same rank and office in society, of the same sentiments and feelings on any interesting subject, have frequently recognized these social and civil relations, by adopting and mutually applying the appellation of brethren. With peculiar propriety, therefore, has this term, with its derivatives, been employed to denote the intimate connection which exists among Christians. Redeemed from the same bondage of sin, and brought into the same glorious liberty of the children of God; cultivating the same temper, forming the same character and contending against the same spiritual enemies, possessing the same leading sentiments, cherishing the same hopes and looking forward to the same blessed immortality, they may well be denominated brethren,

viewed as children of the same family, and expected to exercise toward each other the love of brethren and to perform the offices of brotherly kindness. ingly this appellation was in very familiar use among the primitive Christians. It occurs frequently in the sacred epistles; and the union, tender affection and mutual kind offices which it implies are there forcibly and repeatedly inculcated. "To love the brethren," "to do good, especially to the house-hold of faith," "to be kindly affectioned one to another, forgiving one another," "to add to faith-brotherly kindness," are injunctions upon Christians, which occupy a distinguished place in the writings of their inspired teachers. deed, the manifestation of the temper and disposition, which this fraternal relation requires, is made a distinguishing criterion of a sincere 'Christian profession. "By this," said the Saviour to his disciples, "shall all men know that ve are my disciples, if ye love one another." "We know," saith the apostle John, "that we have passed from death unto life; because we love the brethren." It is added: "if any man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

That part of our text, which comes now under consideration; and which will furnish the subject of the present lecture, requires Christians to exercise the feelings and perform the offices, which result from their relation to each other as brethren: "Add to your faith—brotherly kindness."

In discoursing on this subject, I shall adopt the following method:

- I. I shall attempt a description of brotherly kindness, or love of the brethren, or that peculiar affection, which Christians owe to Christians, as such.
  - II. I shall endeavor to show, that this brotherly love

flows directly from the relation which exists among the true disciples of Christ; and is, therefore, natural, reasonable and even necessary to constitute a man a Christian and render him happy and useful in life.

III. I shall point out some of the proper expressions of this fraternal affection; or, in other words, describe and enforce the peculiar duties of this intimate and endearing relation among Christians.

L That trait of the Christian character, which is denoted by the terms, brotherly kindness, or love of the brethren, though not a distinct affection of the newborn soul, is nevertheless a peculiar modification of love or charity; and it is distinguished from the general principle by its peculiar operations and manifestations. It is more intellectual and disinterested than natural affection and instinctive attachment. also, more impassioned and intensive than general benevolence and universal charity. In our text it is introduced as if it were something different from charity or benevolence, and yet it is unquestionably nothing but charity, peculiarly modified, limited to peculiar objects and implying peculiar strength of attachment. Wherever it exists, it yields the fruits of peace and complacency, and diffuses the sweet influences of union of spirit and harmony of soul. Charity is love in general; love embracing both friends and enemies; love to all mankind. It cannot, therefore, necessarily include complacency in the objects which it embraces. On the contrary, some of these objects, such as personal enemies and the enemies of the cross of Christ, must excite, in Christians, feelings opposite to complacency, approbation and confidence. Nothing indeed, is essential to it, but good will, a desire to promote human felicity, a disposition to do good to all, as we have ability and opportunity. But brotherly love

not only includes good will and benevolent feelings to the brethren, (for these, as we before observed, the Christian must exercise toward all, not excepting personal enemies.) but it includes, likewise, at least in a measure, attachment to the persons, approbation of the character and complacency in the society of the brethren. Like charity, brotherly kindness is long suffering, thinketh no evil and hopeth all things; it sincerely desires and constantly endeavors to do good. So far, these sister graces walk hand in hand: so far, indeed, they are not distinguishable from each other. But beyond this, their offices and operations are distinctly marked. Brotherly love confines her peculiar and distinctive labors to the household of faith; while charity suffers neither character, nor sentiment, nor profession, to restrain her diffusive spirit or circumscribe the sphere of her operations. In a word, brotherly kindness is charity, operating in a limited circle and with peculiar intensity of feeling and strength of It is always in a measure pleased, frequently delighted, with the objects which it embraces; and it embraces all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. in sincerity and truth; at least, all who make a credible profession of religion.

It is true; the complacency, confidence and warm attachment, which constitute brotherly love, will vary in degree; not only with our growth in grace; but according to our views of the perfection or imperfection of the persons who call it into exercise. To those, whose sentiments, tempers and conduct we entirely approve, we shall of course be most strongly attached. In those whose Christian characters are more doubtful, we shall place less confidence and feel less complacency. But for all, who profess to be Christians, and who, by their holy lives and conversation, raise in

our minds the hope that they are indeed Christians; although error and imperfection are still obviously attached to them, and to some of them in a high degree; for all such, I say, if we are ourselves Christians, we shall feel an affection, which we cannot feel for other men, for those who are not Christians, for the impenitent and unbelieving, for the "enemies of the cross of Christ."

II. We proceed to show, as was proposed, that this love of the brethren, this mutual affection between Christians, flows directly from their relation as brethren of the same spiritual family; and is, therefore, natural, reasonable and even necessary to constitute a man a real Christian.

1. Brotherly kindness is natural to Christians. this, however, I do not mean, that the exclusive affection, which exists among Christians, is natural to them, as men; that it is a spontaneous production of the natural and unrenewed heart. On the contrary, by nature they are children of wrath, even as others. Depraved and selfish, full of pride and vanity, subject to anger, envy and malice, unrenewed men are not naturally inclined to acts of mutual kindness and the exercise of disinterested affection. Their natural state is not that of love and peace; but it seems rather to be one of strife, emulation and war. Hence the Scriptures affirm, that "from those lusts, which war in our members, proceed wars and fightings; and hence, it is added, "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts" and every evil word and work. We cannot, therefore, ascribe any of the fruits of disinterested affection to men in their natural and unrenewed state. Indeed. all the divisions, mutual jealousies, and occasional contentions, which still remain among real Christians, may be traced back to the same source, to the remaining portion of corrupt nature in them, to unsubdued passions and unsanctified affections. But as far as they are renewed after the image of God, as far as they possess the spirit of the gospel, as far as they are assimilated to the character of Christ; so far are they united in the bonds of brotherly love, so far this discriminating affection has become natural to them. It is, of course, easy for them to obey the precept, which requires them to "love one another." Being redeemed by the same blood, sanctified by the same Spirit, engaged in the same high pursuit, and influenced by the same principles and motives, they can scarcely fail to feel a peculiar sympathy with each other, a peculiar attachment to each other, a peculiar interest in each other's welfare.

The new command to Christians, to "love one another," we repeat, is not therefore a hard command. The disposition to obey springs up simultaneously with the application of the precept. If we love not the brethren, it is because we do not, in truth, belong to the holy fraternity, because we are not, ourselves, Christians.

But brotherly love is not only natural to a Christian; but it is reasonable and proper, that he should cherish and habitually exercise the affection. Let it not be accounted bigotry in us, nor set down against us, as a mark of illiberality, that we do not recommend, that the same kind and degree of love should be cherished toward infidels and careless sinners, which we exercise towards the disciples of Christ and the members of his mystical body. The wicked have their proper place in the affections of Christians. For them we desire to cultivate, and toward them we would exercise, the most enlarged benevolence, the most enlightened charity, the most perfect good will. We

desire their happiness. We would entreat them to become Christians, that they may be objects of Christian complacency, as well as of Christian philanthropy. We would do everything in our power to turn them from the error of their ways to the wisdom of the just. But to approve of their conduct, to put confidence in their professions, to feel satisfaction in contemplating their characters; while they reject the Saviour, continue in sin, and remain practical enemies of God, is not only not required of us, but it is altogether impossible. Were it possible to treat them as we treat Christians, such treatment would not be charity, but a kind of cruel kindness, if I may use the phrase, which would serve to blind their minds, stupify their consciences, and endanger their immortal souls.

The reasonableness and importance of brotherly love among Christians, however, are seen principally in its tendency to promote their mutual improvement in holiness and preparation for heaven, and in its influence in recommending their religion to others. How often are the hearts of those who mourn in Zion comforted, and the hands of the weak Christian strengthened, by the counsel and support of their sympathizing brethren! How often, too, are they grieved and discouraged, by the unkind treatment and cruel neglect of false brethren! How often, likewise, is reproach brought upon the Christian name, and the language of triumph put into the mouth of scoffers, by the contentions of hypocritical professors of religion! We may add, how would it silence objections against Christianity, if all who profess to believe it, would act according to its true spirit; if it could be said of them, as it was said of the primitive disciples of Christ: "Behold how these Christians love one another!"

It is further stated in our second general proposition,

that brotherly love, at least in a degree, is absolutely necessary to constitute the Christian character. If you feel no stronger attachment to those, whom you have reason to consider as real Christians, than to those who evidently are not Christians; if you love the brethren no more, than you love the men of the world; if you feel no complacency in beholding the image of Christ in the character of his disciples, you certainly possess not his spirit. For, as we before observed, an inspired apostle makes this a test of Christian experience, when he says: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not, however, to enlarge on this point, which is so clearly and fully established by the whole tenor of the gospel, I proceed,

III. To point out some of the proper expressions of this fraternal affection: or in other words to describe and enforce the peculiar duties of brotherly love among Christians. With this view let it be observed and remembered, that these peculiar duties do not interfere with the more general duties of benevolence. They leave us free to obey the calls of charity, to do good to all men as we have opportunity. So likewise, everything which charity requires Christians to do for others, brotherly love prompts them to perform for their "brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel." Are they required to exercise a spirit of compassion and forbearance and forgiveness to all man-Must they pray even for those who persecute them, and relieve the distresses of the unthankful and injurious? Are they bound, as far as possible, to live in peace with the contentious, and seek the good of the wicked, the impenitent and unbelieving? Surely, then, they should do all this, and with peculiar cheerfulness and delight, for their Christian brethren. The offices of brotherly love, however, end not with the requisitions of benevolence and mere good will. It adds to these, the offices of sacred friendship, holy companionship and the complacency and sweet communion of the saints. It leads those who possess it, to feel a peculiarly strong sympathy in the trials, to take a peculiarly deep interest in the welfare, and to exercise a peculiarly tender regard to the character and reputation of their fellow disciples. Christian charity commands us to "do good to all men;" but brotherly kindness requires us to do it, "especially to the household of faith." If you are truly benevolent, you will be always ready, as far as your ability extends, to relieve the distresses of your fellow men; but if you "love the brethren," you will, as I said before, feel a peculiar sympathy with them in their trials and sufferings, and make peculiar efforts and sacrifices for their relief.

Love to the brethren will lead us likewise, to guard their good name, with great care, against the shafts of calumny. Regard to truth and justice, indeed, will not suffer us to misrepresent the conduct of any man; nor permit us to sanction the slanderer by an approving smile, or even by patient silence. But of the reputation of a Christian brother, of a consistent professor of religion, we should be peculiarly tender; and if we are duly influenced by brotherly kindness, we shall spare no labor, to refute the charges which falsehood and malice have raised against him; and which curiosity and inconsideration delight to propagate. On such occasions, we have need of zeal and fortitude, as well as brotherly kindness. For here not only the comfort and usefulness of the individual

slandered; but the cause of religion, the conversion of sinners, and the interests of immortal souls, are deeply involved.

Brotherly kindness requires, moreover, that Christian brethren, especially those who are situated near to each other and are members of the same Christian community, should watch over one another in love; and readily and faithfully impart counsel and reproof, as their respective characters and circumstances may render convenient and proper. Benevolence, indeed, requires us, often to give a word of exhortation, counsel or warning to the impenitent and unbelieving. But the relations of brotherhood furnish additional reasons for the discharge of this duty, and justify the administering of more pressing exhortation and more direct reproof and solemn admonition.

This duty of Christian brethren to each other, has been deemed of so much importance, as to be recognized in almost all church covenants. And vet, perhaps, there is no Christian duty more generally and grievously neglected. How many are there, bound to love one another and kindly to admonish one another, not only by the common ties of a Christian profession. but by the express terms of a sacred contract and mutual covenant; who, nevertheless, pass by a fallen or wandering brother, with as little sensibility and as much neglect, as they would pass an entire stranger! My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Neither the fear of giving offence, nor the apprehension of laboring in vain, should deter us from a prudent, tender and faithful discharge of a duty so positively enjoined and so generally acknowledged; a duty so important to mutual improvement, and so essential to the honor of the Christian name and the elevation and efficiency of the Christian character.

In applying the subject, I add a few words of exhortation.

- 1. Let all who profess to be Christians, seriously inquire, whether they possess this mark, this distinguishing trait of the Christian character; whether they love the brethren; whether they are influenced by a spirit of brotherly kindness; whether they love all those who, as they have reason to believe, love our Lord Jesus Christ: whether, especially, they are living in the habitual discharge of the various duties of brotherly love to those with whom they are connected by the special ties of proximity, similarity of pursuits, and covenant promise. If we are more attached to the world and the men of the world, than we are to the church and the company of believers, we cannot be the disciples of Christ, the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. If we love not our brethren, whom we have seen, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? This, my brethren, is an inquiry, peculiarly important at the present time; when there are so many exciting causes at work, to alienate brethren; when so many openly despise and revile the church of God, and continually labor to sow the seeds of discord among brethren, and draw away unstable souls from the faith and fellowship of the saints. Let us, then, be serious and faithful in making the inquiry, and in applying it to ourselves.
- 2. Let all, who possess the spirit of brotherly kindness, cherish and cultivate this heavenly temper. By familiar Christian intercourse, by friendly counsel, by tender admonition and by embracing every opportunity for the exercise and outward expression of brotherly love, let them strive to improve the affection in themselves and recommend it to others. In a particular manner, let them be kind and faithful to those

with whom they are connected by the special and endearing bonds of covenant relation. Often sitting, as they do, at the same consecrated table, and partaking of the same sacramental elements, let them be of one mind and one spirit. Let their mutual love abound. Let them put away all wrath and clamor and evil speaking; and let them be "kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them." Thus will the church, in which they are associated, become "beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem and terrible as an army with banners"—beautiful to them that love the divine law; and to all who continue to transgress that holy law, terrible as an army with banners, under the Great Captain of salvation, marching forward to conquest and to glory. Thus will the cause of the Redeemer be honored true religion revived. Christians edified and sinners saved.

Brethren, the feast before us is a feast of love;\* designed to promote brotherly love, as well as to commemorate redeeming love. While, therefore, we remember the disinterested and unparalleled love of the Redeemer, and love Him who first loved us and gave himself for us, let us not forget our relation to the redeemed, for whom he died; and let us cherish an unfeigned love for the brethren. Let us "add to our faith—brotherly kindness." When we sit down to the feast of love, let love abound; let it flow from heart to heart, and glow in every bosom. "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

<sup>\*</sup> Delivered on a Communion Sabbath.

# LECTURE X.

### CHRISTIAN CHARITY OR BENEVOLENCE.

#### 2 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO ENOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

CHARITY, though last named in our text, is not the least important of the Christian virtues. On the contrary, an inspired apostle, comparing faith, hope and charity, has expressly said, "the greatest of these is charity." Let it not be forgotten, however, that neither this Christian grace, nor any other which goes to constitute a part of the Christian character, can exist alone; much less, independently of Christian faith. All these virtues are important in their places, all are mutually dependent, all spring alike from the same gracious and life-giving principle, all, therefore, are worthy of careful and diligent cultivation; nor can the claims of any one of them be safely neglected. But charity holds among them a prominent place, and claims peculiar attention. It is, indeed, in the comprehensive sense of the term, the essence of religion. the consummation of faith, the crown of humility, "the end of the commandment," "the fulfilling of the law." And even in the restricted sense, in which the term is used in our text, where it evidently denotes merely

love to man, charity is a crowning virtue in the Christian system; and, therefore, worthy of particular attention and diligent cultivation.

With a view to recommend the cultivation of this Christian affection, with a faithful discharge of all involved duties; and thus to enforce the last part of the exhortation in our text; "add to your faith—charity," I shall endeavor, as accurately as I can, to explain the term; pointing out the boundaries between this and other Christian graces, distinguishing it from all counterfeits, describing its nature, and showing its operations and effects. And this I shall attempt to do, both negatively and positively.

- I. Negatively.—Under this general head of discourse, I observe,
- 1. That charity, as the term is used in our text, does not comprehend all the religious affections. have, indeed, already intimated; but it is proper here to state the fact more explicitly and illustrate it more clearly. Let it be remembered, then, that the terms charity and love in the New Testament, are translated from the same original Greek word. Of course, where the sense is not limited by the nature of the subject, nor by the import of the context, they possess the same meaning and denote precisely the same thing. Thus in those two passages of the apostle to the Gentiles, already quoted; in one of which he says, "love is the fulfilling of the law," and in the other, "the end of the commandment is charity," the original word being the same, the subject of discourse being likewise the same, and no restricting clause being added to either, it is evident, at first view, that the terms charity and love there denote the same universal principle, the exercise both of pious and benevolent affections, the 'spirit and substance of the two great commands, on

which hang all the law and the prophets, love to God and love to man! But it is equally evident that both these terms are sometimes limited and restrained in their meaning, either by some qualifying epithet, or by the very nature of the subject of discourse. "love to God," "love to man," "love of the brethren," are phrases denoting each a peculiar exercise and manifestation of the affections of the Christian; and of course limiting the signification of the term love. So, likewise, the term charity in that beautiful description of Christian philanthropy, in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, is by the description itself restricted in import, and seen, at once, to be confined to the exercise of the social affections, regulated by heavenly wisdom and sanctified by divine grace. In our text, I add, the term is obviously limited, and restricted to the same meaning by the connection in which it stands. The term godliness, as we stated in a preceding discourse, includes love to God; and the term brotherly kindness, denotes the peculiar attachment among Christians; leaving the term charity to occupy the intermediate space; denoting love to mankind, or benevolence, or Christian philanthropy.

2. Our second negative remark is, that the charity enjoined in our text, or that love and good will to mankind which the gospel requires, is totally distinct from what is usually denominated natural affection, or private attachment to relatives and friends. It is true, that instinctive attachment, which parents feel to their children and children to their parents; and which exists with different degrees of strength in all the relations of life, is an original and highly important principle of human nature; if not absolutely necessary for the preservation of the human race. It is true,

likewise, that a perversion of these instincts and a want of these natural affections in a person, involves great guilt and implies peculiar hardness of heart. He that provides not for his own household, according to the decision of inspiration, is worse than an infi-Still it is equally true, that the existence of these natural affections, this instinctive attachment to kindred and friends, is not Christian charity, and furnishes no evidence of religious principle. The former may exist in a high degree, and operate with great power, where the latter is entirely wanting. For, if it be true, according to the off-repeated maxim, that "charity begins at home;" it is no less true, that that which "begins and ends at home," is not Christian charity. The private, natural affections, I said, furnish no evidence of holy principle. They are common to the wicked and the good. Nay: they are not confined to the human race. Other animals as well as men, have an instinctive attachment to their kind to their associates. more especially to their offspring. They guard them in times of danger, protect them against the assaults of enemies, nourish them in their weakness, and provide for their wants. Such attachment, therefore, does not result from religious principle; nor is it the effect of reason and conscience. It is a mere instinctive propensity of animal nature; wisely implanted, indeed, but including in it nothing moral, and furnishing no mark of distinction between virtue and vice. none, then, make it a criterion of moral character. Let none imagine, that they possess Christian charity, or that love which the gospel inculcates, merely because they feel the instinctive affections of animal nature; merely because they do what infidels may do, provide for their own; what abandoned sinners may do, love those that love them; what even the beasts

of the field may do, protect and nourish their offspring. Christian charity, as will soon be made apparent, is a higher, a more distinguishing principle; a principle not common to all sensitive beings, not even possessed by all rational beings; but peculiar to those whose feelings are regulated by intelligence and a good conscience, who are, at least in a measure, sanctified through the truth.

3. We remark, again, under our first general head of discourse, that there is a natural sympathy, a blind compassion, which has sometimes been mistaken for charity; which is nevertheless, till sanctified, perfectly distinct from it: and is often seen in its most elevated flights and efficient operations, entirely separated from religion and even from reason. Indeed, this, like the private affections, is a mere animal instinct, leading not only the good, but often the most wicked of the human race; not only men, but frequently the most ferocious beasts, to sympathize with their fellows in distress, and fly to their relief. Think not, then, that a blind feeling, an indiscriminate sensibility, a sympathy which is common to rational and mere sensitive beings, can constitute Christian charity. It is true, this instinct, like the private affections and relative attachments, was implanted in animal nature for a wise and benevolent purpose; but like them, it is not a moral quality, it is not a Christian grace, it is not a holy principle. In itself considered, it constitutes neither a good nor a bad character, but it may be subservient to either. Unsanctified, however prompt and powerful, it leaves the heart polluted and the man unholy. When enlightened and well directed, indeed, it gives energy to benevolent enterprise. Its implantation, therefore, marks the wisdom of Him who implanted it in the human breast. But as an animal

feeling, it is still neither virtuous nor vicious. It is no more a moral quality in "man that mourns," than in the bird that flutters and the beast that raves at the sight of distress! Confound not, therefore, the sickly sensibility and the whining sympathy of those who have no heart to feel for real distress, and no hand to relieve actual sufferings, with the melting charity and expansive benevolence of the humble Christian and active philanthropist.

4. I remark, once more, under our first general head of discourse, that the mere bestowment of alms, though often a duty, comes not up to the high demands of Christian charity. Indeed, the performance of what have been denominated "deeds of charity." is often the result of blind compassion and inconsiderate habit; and not unfrequently of worldly policy, or the basest hypocrisy, the fruit, not of disinterested affection. but of the most contracted selfishness. Let no such equivocal acts, then, be received as sure evidence of that charity, "which seeketh not her own." So likewise, a false liberality, confounding all sentiments and countenancing all species of error, has sometimes been denominated charity. But this, surely, is not the charity which rejoiceth only in the truth. Indeed, that spirit which smiles with the same complacency on the advocates of truth and of error; and under pretence of charity and candor, countenances alike purity and pollution, virtue and vice; which knows not how to frown on iniquity, error and folly; is so far from possessing the character and deserving the name of charity, that all its tendencies are directly opposed to the operations of that heaven-born grace. Instead of promoting truth, holiness and felicity, it encourages the bold speculator in his errors; it soothes the careless

sinner in his sins; it produces nothing but mischief and misery in the world.

Let none, therefore, conclude that they possess Christian charity; because they speak well of every body and every thing. We should, indeed, be candid in our judgment of men, and mild in our remarks on their sentiments and opinions. But charity will not allow us to approve, much less, to commend, what seems to us erroneous and what evidently leads to licentiousness. We should be kind and candid and courteous: but we must speak the truth in love. We must not, by a false liberality and presumptuous disregard to the word of God, give encouragement to vain speculations, foolish conjectures and delusive imaginations. On the contrary, we must rebuke heresv. wherever we find it; and not become partakers in other men's sins. Such liberality as the world often admires, be it remembered, is not charity, it is enmity to the truth, it is infidelity in disguise, it is cruelty under a mask of kindness.

II. I proceed now, as was proposed, for our second branch of discourse, to remark positively, that when the apostle, in our text, exhorts Christians to "add to their faith — charity," he exhorts them to exercise and cultivate a religious affection, a moral principle, a principle which leads those, who possess it, to wish well and do good to all men, as far as they have ability and opportunity. The exhortation is tantamount to the second great law of love, as laid down by our Saviour, in this comprehensive precept: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And this evidently enjoins upon us love of all mankind, of the whole human race, of every being who possesses the common properties of human nature. For the parable of

the "Good Samaritan," by which it is illustrated and enforced, shows us, that Christ intended that the term neighbor should be limited in its meaning, neither by local situation, by national distinction, by private affection, nor by natural descent and the ties of consanguinity. We are required, therefore, to love not only relatives but strangers, not only countrymen but foreigners, not only friends but enemies, not only saints but sinners. Wherever an individual of the human family falls within the range of the spiritual eye, or the reach of the helping hand, in whatever region of the earth, under whatever degree of civilization, of whatever nation or tribe, of whatever rank or color, he is a proper object of love: he is our neighbor, made of the same blood with ourselves, and entitled to all the benevolent aid, which we have power and opportunity to bestow upon him.

Let it be remembered, however, that this love, which embraces all mankind, is a love of benevolence, not of complacency. A benevolent man can exercise good will toward the most wicked and profligate of the human race. But with persons of this character, he cannot be pleased. On the contrary he must abhor iniquity. He will not only be grieved, but feel a degree of pious indignation, when he beholds transgressors. In the language of the Psalmist, he may exclaim: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." He cannot look upon He cannot even think of them with approbation. them, without feeling displeasure. It is impossible, that he should take delight in associating with them, or for a moment exercise toward them the love of complacency. Still, however, he wishes them well, and

desires to promote their happiness. He sincerely wishes, that their characters may be changed; and, if indulged with the opportunity, he will not suffer his desire to vanish without an attempt to render them objects of esteem as well as of good will. Thus may we exercise, even toward the wicked, a love of benevolence; and thus, if we are Christians, we shall cherish and cultivate that "charity, which thinketh no evil," that love, which "worketh no ill to his neighbor," that good will, which desires, and strives to promote, the happiness of the whole human family.

Similar observations may be made concerning personal enemies. They likewise are objects of benevolence. "Love your enemies;" "Bless them that curse you;" "Do good to them that hate you;" "And pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you:" These are the directions of One, who spake with authority, as never man spake. But the love, here enjoined, is evidently not a love of approbation and complacency. We must not approve of wickedness, and we cannot take pleasure in that which opposes our interests and inclinations. Indeed, it is impossible for us, to be pleased with the character, conduct and persons of inveterate enemies. It is impossible to exercise toward them that tender regard, and enjoy in them that pleasing satisfaction, which are the peculiar fruits of friendship. Yet we may exercise toward them all that love, which wishes well and endeavors to do good. We may be ready to forgive them, ready to be reconciled to them, ready to do everything in our power for their real benefit and permanent good. We may sincerely desire, earnestly pray for and diligently seek their reformation, their temporal and eternal felicity.

This, my brethren, is the charity recommended in

our text. This is the love of benevolence; and with this kind of affection a good man loves his neighbor as he does himself; an enemy as a friend; a sinner as a saint; a stranger as a brother. He will no sooner injure the former than the latter. As far as his power and opportunity for action extend, he is as ready to do good to the former as to the latter. For his great rule of reciprocal action is, to do to others, as he would have others do to him; and the measure and limit of his social principle is that of self-love, to wish well to all, and do good to all, as his eye can behold and his hand reach the objects of benevolence.

Lest, however, this statement should be misunderstood or perverted, it is necessary to throw in a caution; not, indeed, to limit the principle, but to show its proper sphere of operation. Let it be remembered, then, that this love which embraces all mankind, this principle of universal charity, in bestowing its benefits, looks not so much at immediate gratification of desire, as at substantial and permanent good. It does not put into the hands of the enemies of their country however much they may wish for them, weapons to be used against the public peace and safety. It does nothing for them, however much they may desire it, which would enable them to injure themselves or Such conduct would not indeed, be doing them good. On the contrary, it would only gratify their malice, assist them in executing their wicked purposes, and thus establish them in a course of iniquity, and ultimately increase their guilt and wretchedness.

Nor does this principle, in its legitimate operations, produce the same conduct in our intercourse with the wicked and the good. For such indiscriminate treatment of persons of all characters, would not advance

the cause of benevolence and human happiness. On the contrary, it would encourage iniquity and produce mischief and misery. It would often elevate wickedness to high places. It would frequently extend the influence of the ungodly. It would not only enable the unprincipled to cherish and gratify more generally their evil propensities, and thus treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath; but it would give prominence to their corrupting example, and thus enable them to scatter more widely the seeds of vice and wretchedness.

Nor, I remark again, does this principle require us, to do the same things for a stranger and a friend; a friend and a brother; a brother and ourselves; and for this plain reason, that we have not, in these respective relations, the same power and opportunities of doing good. Each man has much to do for himself, which he cannot do for another; and for his family and immediate friends, which he has neither opportunity nor ability to do for other men and other families.

A man, therefore, who from mistaken views of benevolence, should disregard the relations of life and society, neglect the opportunities of doing good which proximity furnishes, and begin with the duties of the more remote relations, would not surely best promote the general good. Should any one, for example, leave his own family to perish, or subsist by the bounty of others, for the sake of feeding and clothing his neighbor's children, he would surely not adopt the best method of doing good, nor act the part dictated by enlightened benevolence.

The same observation might be applied to one who should neglect the poor and needy among his own relatives and in his own immediate vicinity, to seek for objects of compassion more remote and less known.

That factitious philanthropy, which is always stretching its vision beyond the reach of its arm, which always has its hand closed against the calls and claims of poverty and distress within its reach, and reserves all its sympathies and all its aid for unapproachable scenes of wretchedness; that romantic sensibility, which flies from actual distress, to search for objects of compassion in distant climes, or in the regions of fiction, while it can behold poverty and distress at its own door, without shedding a tear or offering relief; which can pass by the wounded and oppressed, without "pouring oil and wine into his wounds," and vet weep at mere tales of woe, and lament the fate of some imaginary hero; that false, boasting, hypocritical philanthropy, that squeamish, sickly sensibility, which shows itself only where it is useless, and disappears, the moment its aid is solicited, deserves not the name of benevolence; it certainly is not Christian charity, that charity which is ever watchful, ever active, and "never faileth."

Christian charity or enlightened and sanctified benevolence, I add, is a principle, though universal in its nature, yet necessarily limited in its operations. It leads each individual, to seek and endeavor to promote the general good, by embracing the best opportunities and employing the best means of actually doing good. It is, indeed, consistent with self-love and sympathy as they exist in the renewed heart, where they meet in harmony, and act together, under the guidance of heavenly wisdom and the sanctifying influence of divine grace.

Should it be asked, what is the difference in operation between benevolence and selfishness, the answer would be obvious and at hand. Benevolence, by doing all the particular good possible, endeavors to pro-

mote the highest general good; nor can it perform any act, which is known or believed to be opposed to this Selfishness, on the contrary, seeks for glorious end. personal gratification, irrespective of the general good. and even without regard to the nature and ultimate tendency of the means used. Its object is self-gratification and self-aggrandizement; and the injury and even ruin of others, is often among the chosen means by which this object is sought and obtained. nevolence regards both the means and the end; and seeks the one and uses the other, with the same disinterested spirit and the same enlarged views. language of one, whose experience on the subject was as extensive, as his views were enlarged and discriminating, I add: "True Christian benevolence is always occupied in producing happiness to the utmost of its powers, and according to the extent of its sphere, be it larger or more limited; it contracts itself to the measure of the smallest: it can expand itself to the amplitude of the largest. It resembles majestic rivers. which are poured from an unfailing and abundant Silent and peaceful in their outset, they begin with dispensing beauty and comfort to every cottage, by which they pass. In their further progress, they fertilize provinces and enrich kingdoms. length they pour themselves into the ocean, where changing their name, but not their nature, they visit distant nations, and spread throughout the world the expansive tide of their beneficence."\*

As the principal object of this lecture is to illustrate, define and enforce the great doctrine of Christian charity, I cannot perhaps bring it to a better conclusion, than by calling your attention to that beautiful

<sup>\*</sup> Wilberforce.

description of charity in the thirteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, with a brief paraphrase:

"Charity suffereth long and is kind." It endures injuries and provocations with meekness and long suffering. It permits neither anger, nor pride, nor false honor to get possession of the soul, to settle into severe and malicious resentment, and end in cruel and bloody revenge. On the contrary, it displays moderation to all men. It is ever ready to forgive injuries; and on all occasions it returns good for evil, blessing for cursing and kind intercession for cruel treatment and reproach.

"Charity envieth not." It is not grieved at the prosperity of others. Nor does it wish to deprive them of their wealth, or honor, or means of rational enjoyment.

"Charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly." It excludes pride from the heart and arrogance from the life. It produces humbleness of mind, and meekness and condescension in deportment. It allows not a man to exalt himself above measure; nor treat others with contempt or neglect. It induces us in honor to prefer one another, and with humility to esteem others better than ourselves. It conducts with propriety and decorum at all times; and treats all with courtesy and kindness. It pays due regard to time, place, station, age and character; and becomes all things to all men.

"Charity seeketh not her own." It does not pursue any private benefit, nor seek any personal emolument to the injury or even to the neglect of others. It will not permit us to engage in any business, nor pursue any employment, which is not useful to mankind and beneficial to society. Much less will it suf-

fer us to seek for riches or honor or pleasure, where our gain must bring loss and injury upon others.

"Charity is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil." It does not take offence at every trifling provocation. Nor is it jealous and suspicious, ready to put the worst construction on the unguarded words and doubtful actions of others, and thus condemn them without a hearing and upon mere conjecture.

"Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity; but rejoiceth in the truth." It is grieved at the sight of transgressors; but with joy it beholds the prevalence of truth and righteousness. It is pleased with the beauty of holiness; but it abhors every evil and false way. It rejoices when one sinner repents; but its joy abounds, when many are seen turning from the error of their ways unto the wisdom of the just, when souls "flock unto Jesus, as doves to their windows."

"Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It covers a multitude of sins. It keeps the secrets and conceals the faults of others, where duty to the public does not require exposure. It bears with their infirmities and apologizes for their foibles. It listens to evil reports with caution, unwilling to admit their truth; but to those which are favorable to character, with satisfaction, hoping that they may prove true; and it never fails to counteract, as far as possible, the effects of careless misrepresentations and malicious falsehood and slander.

"Charity never faileth." It is a constant, an abiding principle. It will reign forever in that world, where the saints are knit together in the bonds of indissoluble union and holy love.

This, my hearers, is the charity of Christianity.

This is that charity, that love, that benevolence, which distinguishes a Christian from a man of the world. This is, indeed, as we have seen, an affection peculiar to the children of God, the disciples of Christ, the heirs of glory.

If, therefore, we have faith, let us add to it charity. To cultivate and exercise this benevolent affection, we are urged by the purest motives and the highest considerations. Blessings temporal and eternal are promised to those, who work the works of faith with love, and continue patient in well-doing. And the example of Him, who causeth the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, is set before us for our imitation. not unrighteous, to forget our work and labor of love." "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." "Blessed is the man that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." this was manifest the love of God toward us; because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "To do good, therefore, and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Finally, brethren, let love abound, let it be without dissimulation, let us love not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Reverting to our text, I add; let us remember, that all the Christian graces spring from a common principle; and that all the Christian virtues are necessary to constitute a complete and consistent Christian character. Let us, therefore, examine ourselves, that we may learn, whether we are in the faith; and let us "give all diligence, that we may add to our faith, virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge tem-

perance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." May all these things be in us and abound, and so may an abundant entrance be ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.—Amen.

# LECTURE XI.

### SYMMETRY OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

#### 2 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

HAVING delivered eight lectures on this text, and distinctly treated of the eight Christian graces and virtues, particularly named in it, as constituent parts of the Christian character, it may have been supposed that the subject was sufficiently exhausted to induce me to bring this series of lectures to a close. But the very term of exhortation, "add," suggests the importance and seems to require a distinct consideration of the connection between these several constituent parts of character, and their bearing on each other. therefore, I have occasionally adverted to this topic, in the previous discussions, the importance of the subject will justify me in devoting the time allotted to a single lecture, to a more particular consideration of the connection between the several parts and elements which constitute the Christian character: thus showing their bearing on each other, their mutual subserviency to each other's development and maturity. and the tendency of the whole combined, to produce symmetry and perfection of character.

With a view to the accomplishment of this object, I must invite your attention to two distinct general remarks.

In the *first* place, I remark, that some of these qualities are *essential* to the Christian character. All indeed, as I shall have occasion to remark in the sequel of the discourse, are important; and perhaps in some measure and to some degree, indispensable. But the necessity of some of them is more especially obvious; so that whatever else we find in the character of a man; if we do not find these traits clearly developed, we are not authorized to view him as a Christian, nor to encourage him to hope for the salvation of the gospel.

1. Such, I remark, is faith; faith in God, the Father of all, and the rightful sovereign of the universe; faith in Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man, possessing the nature and attributes of both, and therefore able to reconcile and save all that come unto God by him; faith in the Holy Spirit, by whose influence and operations the blood of the atonement is applied, the heart renewed and the soul sanctified.

Such a faith is indispensably necessary in the religion of a sinner; because faith is the constituted condition of justification and the moving principle of all holy action. Hence says an inspired apostle: "he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of all them that diligently seek him." Hence the author of the Acts of the Apostles declares, that "there is no other name given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ." Hence, I may add, the Holy Spirit is promised to those and to those only, who feel their weakness and unworthiness, and humbly ask for divine assistance. Hence I subjoin, once more, that we

see the propriety and force of that inspired declaration: "Without faith it is impossible to please God; and of that other declaration, of the same authority: "Ye are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;" and even of that solemn declaration of Christ himself: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Thus obvious is it, that faith is an essential and fundamental principle in the Christian character; so essential, that without it, no one can be saved; so essential, that all the provisions of the gospel, all the manifestations of divine mercy, and all the overtures of divine grace, are unavailing without it: so essential, that all pretensions to piety and virtue, and all external expressions and appearances of morality and religion, without it, are vain; yes, so essential, that while a man rejects or doubts these leading truths of Christianity, we are not authorized to receive him into Christian fellowship, or to encourage him to hope for pardon and eternal life. He may be a man of amiable temper, of kind sympathies, of worldly wisdom, and external habits of morality; like the young man in the gospel, whom Jesus is said to have loved, he may have so many amiable qualities, as to claim our respect and affection. But, while destitute of Christian faith, like that young man, he lacks one thing essential to Christian character; and like him, if he repents not, he will go away in sorrow, and be banished forever from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. Let no one, therefore, look for a Christian character, or expect to find a single Christian virtue, fully developed and permanently enduring, where there is no genuine, established and living faith. For without this, no other grace can live and grow. This is, indeed, not only essential to the whole, as the very instrument of justification; but it is intimately

connected with every Christian grace, furnishing the common principle from which they all spring, and the foundation on which they all rest for support.

- 2. Another essential characteristic of the Christian is piety, or, as it is denominated in our text, godliness. There are men, who call themselves Christians, and who profess to entertain a general belief of the truth of Christianity; who nevertheless make all their religion consist in certain acts, which they call morality. They talk about virtue and conscience and duty. But all their virtue consists in observing certain rules of honesty in dealing, and perhaps a few boasted "acts of charity," performed under the sound of a trumpet. But prayer and humiliation before God, constitute no part of their religion. They do not regard his sabbaths and sacraments, as holy institutions. nor even reverence his name and submit to the authority of his word. They evidently have no "fear of God before their eyes;" nor do they perform a single act or abstain from a single transaction, out of regard to his authority, or with reference to his will. our position is, that such men are not Christians. However, according to the worldly maxim, they may account "honesty the best policy," and carefully avoid all fraud in their dealings; and out of regard to appearance, and for the purpose of securing a good reputation, may do something which bears the name of benevolence, they are destitute of that, which can alone render their conduct holy and acceptable in the sight of God. They are sinners, impenitent sinners, under condemnation, living without God, and without any good hope of eternal life.
- 3. The same may be said of the last great virtue named in our text. *Charity*, or Christian benevolence, or that love which leads to a faithful discharge of the

relative duties of social life, which disposes us to do to others as we would that they should do to us, even to do good to all as we have ability and opportunity, is likewise indispensable to a Christian character. It is the crowning grace in that character. It is that, by which genuine faith always works; and without which it is dead. It is indeed one of the clearest manifestations of godliness itself. It is that, without which piety cannot live, being inseparably connected with it. For, "if any man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

Thus is it evident, that these three qualities of the Christian character are all essential qualities; so essential, that, if one be confessedly wanting, all appearance of the other two must be mere appearance, external show, the shadow without the substance. Faith, or rather a profession of faith, without works, works of piety and benevolence, is dead, being alone. So external acts of piety and devotion, (where there is no faith in the testimony of God concerning his Son, as the Saviour of sinners; and no active benevolence. employed in alleviating the sorrows and promoting the happiness of mankind,) must be mere external acts, hypocritical and vain, performed without corresponding affections of the heart, and therefore finding no acceptance and favor with God. So, I add, all that conduct in the intercourse among worldly men, usually denominated morality, which does not spring from faith in the Redeemer, and is not accompanied by feelings of reverence and acts of piety toward God. is nothing but selfish morality, a hollow-hearted charity, which profiteth nothing. Set it down, therefore, as a truth never to be forgotten, in examining yourselves, and in forming your opinions of men, that these three things, at least, must exist in every Christian; and must be found in every man entitled to Christian fellowship, and interested in the precious promises of the gospel. Other qualities, as I said, are important; and perhaps, in a measure, indispensable. But these are so obviously essential, and so intimately connected, that we must not indulge a hope of salvation, without finding them developed and harmoniously combined in our experience and character; nor encourage others to hope without the same evidence of a new creation and a divine life in the soul.

Secondly, I proceed to make and illustrate the remark, that all the qualities named in our text, are important in their place, and salutary in their bearing on each other and on the whole Christian character. If not absolutely essential to its existence in some degree, yet are they productive in their mutual influence, and thus subservient to its symmetry and completeness. Three, at least, of these qualities, we have seen, are necessary and must be combined to constitute a Christian. Let us now look at the tendency and bearing of the other five; and we shall not fail to discover their mutual influence on each other, and their joint influence in elevating the standard of Christian character, and thus preparing the soul for an abundant entrance into the kingdom of Christ and of glory.

1. The first of these is fortitude, courage, or firmness of purpose, which in our text is denominated virtue. Now although a high degree of this quality is not absolutely necessary to constitute a Christian character; since there are many timid Christians, who nevertheless, in the judgment of charity, are sincere Christians and truly converted persons; yet no one can have failed to observe that this timidity is a great hindrance to them, in their progress toward perfect holiness; fre-

quently involving them in inconsistencies and filling them with perplexities. We live in a world of temptation and trial; and we need fortitude to bear the one, and courage to meet and overcome the other. Especially do we need this Christian heroism, in seasons of persecution. And who can expect entirely to escape such seasons, since an inspired apostle has assured us, that "all they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution." Truly, in these days and in this land, we are not exposed, on account of religion, to the sword and the faggot, in the hand of civil power. But many are subject to persecutions scarcely less trying to the timid soul. They are exposed, at least, to the pointing of the finger of scorn, to language of reproach, to social degradation and studied contempt. And does it require no fortitude, to bear all this with equanimity of mind? Does it require no courage, to persevere in the path of duty, amidst such obstructions? Yes, if you would maintain, everywhere and at all times, a consistent Christian character; and overcome that fear of the world, which begetteth a snare, vou must be firm and resolute, vou must cultivate a spirit of courage and fortitude, you must "add to your faith virtue." You cannot make high attainments in the divine life nor rapid progress: toward heaven, without this Christian grace.

2. Christian knowledge is another quality of the growing Christian. Here again we remark, that high attainments in knowledge are not absolutely necessary to Christian character; for faith and piety and charity, the three essential elements of that character, may exist, where the mind is weak and knowledge limited. Nor does the degree of knowledge always mark the progress of grace in the heart. Still it is important in its bearing on Christian character. Ac-

cordingly we are directed to cultivate the former as well as the latter: "Grow in grace," says an apostle, "and in the *knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Indeed, sanctified knowledge, a knowledge of the Scriptures, a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, has a direct and steady bearing on the improvement and elevation of Christian character. It is important to regulate the feelings of piety and benevolence, and to give direction to the promptings of faith and a good Hence, the wanderings of error, and conscience. even the ravings of the wildest enthusiasm, may often be traced to honest ignorance, to a want of thorough acquaintance with the word of God, to a misapprehension of the meaning of the Scriptures, to a heated imagination, unrestrained by an enlightened understanding, to "zeal without knowledge." If, therefore, you would effectually guard against error, with all its perverting and corrupting influences, you must study the Scriptures with meekness and diligence. If you would grow in grace, and improve your character to the highest degree of perfection, you must, with a view to this result, strive to increase your knowledge of divine truth, and of everything pertaining to God and the wav of salvation.

3. We come in course to the consideration of temperance or self-government, or a due regulation of all the appetites and passions, which belong to human nature. The importance of this virtue to the preservation and improvement of Christian character, can scarcely need illustration. So evident is its influence on piety and benevolence, that we can with difficulty conceive of their existence, much less of their elevated range and pure and permanent exercise, in a soul under the dominion of passion and appetite. We have,

indeed, heard an intemperate man pray, and with apparent fervor and sincerity; and we have seen a passionate man, in his calmer moments, giving alms to the poor, and even with a smile of complacency on his cheek. But we could scarcely believe that the former act proceeded from a principle of piety, or the latter from genuine benevolence. At least, we have felt assured, that neither the one nor the other of these essential Christian graces could grow to much maturity, till the counteracting passions and appetites of the soul were subdued, and the whole man brought into subjection to the laws of temperance. prominent direction of Grecian philosophy; "Know thyself;" but it is a precept of higher authority and importance: "Keep thy heart," or in other words: "Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." We cannot fail, therefore, to see the high importance of temperance or self-control, in its bearing on the essential Christian graces, and the elevation of the Christian character.

4. I might pursue the illustration, by adverting to the remaining qualities of Christian character, mentioned in our text. But further illustration seems to be quite unnecessary, as the same train of reflection and the same course of remark, are obviously applicable to the two remaining qualities of patience and broth-We may, therefore, safely conclude, erly kindness. that all these Christian graces and virtues are intimately connected and mutually subservient to each other's growth and maturity; and that combined, they conspire to elevate Christian character, and give it symmetry of form and a perfection of moral beauty. deed, this seems to be the only kind of perfection attainable in this state of discipline and probation. solute perfection, which some presumptuously claim,

is not of earthly growth; it is found mature in heaven alone. But the perfection, resulting from a combination of the elements of Christian character, in due proportion, and displaying Christian symmetry and moral beauty, is "the highest style of man" on earth.

I proceed to make a brief, practical application of the subject.

1. Let those, who wish to know what spirit they are of, and whether they are authorized to indulge a Christian hope and make a Christian profession, remember that there are, at least, three modifications of Christian experience, which are essential to Christian character; and which never fail to manifest themselves to those who possess them, as often as they faithfully examine their hearts and lives. Apply, then, these tests of character, and you will, if you are Christians, find evidence of your regeneration, and ground for a good hope; you will discover these marks of the new creation, enstamped upon your souls; you will be persuaded of your adoption through grace, and learn that you have the Spirit of God abiding in you, that you are living by faith on the Son of God, in the exercise of pious and benevolent affections, supreme love to God and charity or good will to all mankind. But, if you find not these marks of the children of God; whatever else you find, be assured, you are not Chris-If you have not a settled faith in Christ, as the Great Mediator and only Saviour, connected with feelings of piety and benevolence: if either of these essential qualities of spirituality is wanting, you are driven to the conclusion that the divine life is not begun in your souls, that you are yet in a state of alienation from God. You may have had a vivid experience and have been exercised with strong feelings and highly excited emotions; you may possess strong

sympathies and many amiable qualities; you may have secured, the friendship of the world and the flattering commendations of your companions and friends. But all these will not save you; all these furnish no evidence of holiness and preparation for heaven; all these you may have, and yet perish, at last, with hypocrites and unbelievers. Wherefore, examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; a faith which works by love, love to God and man.

- 2. In conversing with others about their spiritual condition, or examining those who wish to join themselves to the people of the Lord, let the same discriminating marks of Christian experience and character be faithfully applied. We should, indeed, be candid and kind in our judgment of others, and severe only in our examination of ourselves. Still we must be faithful, while we are tender in our treatment of others. We must not encourage them to indulge a hope of salvation, nor make a profession of such a hope, till they in their hearts believe in the great doctrines of Christianity, till they so believe as to act in accordance with their faith, till their faith is shown to be genuine by acts of piety and deeds of charity.
- 3. Let all who have evidence of their regeneration, who indulge a rational and good hope, that through grace "they have passed from death unto life," strive to grow in grace and elevate their Christian character, till they reach the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, and are made perfect with him in glory. With this view, let them remember, that all the Christian virtues and graces are mutually dependent, and subservient to each other's growth. Let them, therefore, cultivate them all with diligence. Let them carefully use all the appointed means of grace, and improve all the privileges which they enjoy. The

Sabbath and the Sanctuary, the Scriptures and the Sabbath School, the ordinances of the gospel and the prayer-meeting, let them never neglect.

My Christian friends, if you would form a complete Christian character; if you would do the most possible good and enjoy the highest happiness; if you would secure "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" you must attend to all these things with care and diligence; you must "give all diligence, to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

# LECTURE XII.

## CHRISTIAN DILIGENCE.

### 2 PETER I. 5-7.

GIVING ALL DILIGENCE, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE, AND TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE, AND TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE, AND TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE, AND TO PATIENCE GODLINESS, AND TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS, AND TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY.

THE phrase, "giving all diligence," will furnish the theme of the present lecture, the last in our series on the text. The eight distinct virtues and graces named in it, have been separately considered and fully il-And in the next preceding lecture, an atlustrated. tempt was made to show their mutual connection and their bearing on each other, as indicated by the term add: and to enforce the exhortation to cultivate them together, and with a due regard to their relative importance. It remains, therefore, in order to exhaust the whole subject of this comprehensive exhortation, that we contemplate and apply the strong language of qualification, emphatically recited; "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge. and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." That we may attain to a high Christian character and become qualified for "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus

Christ," and for the enjoyment of "a glorious immortality," we must not only cultivate all the Christian virtues and graces, adding one to another, and all to faith; but we must do this with diligence, yes, with all, diligence, with unquenchable zeal and untiring perseverance. Christian diligence, or religious industry, therefore, is the definite subject, proposed for this, the last lecture in the series.

I. With a view to the illustration of the subject, I remark, that the exhortation is adapted to the nature of man. Reasoning à priori, from a view of the human constitution, we might infer the necessity of Christian diligence to Christian progress and Christian attainments.

Man is essentially an active being; made for action and endowed with active powers. True it is, he possesses likewise a passive capacity, or rather a susceptibility of feeling passive impressions. But even these passive impressions, as the influences of external objects upon the mind of man are sometimes denominated, are designed to prompt him to action, and are therefore principally valuable, as they are subservient to his active powers. Indeed, when they fail of producing this effect, they fail of securing their primary object; and ultimately, of yielding anything like enduring happiness. For, in man, happiness generally results from action and pursuit; and seems to be inseparably connected with the proper employment of the active powers of body and mind, with the full development and regular exercise of all the functions of human nature. Indeed, so essential is activity to man, that he cannot long live without it. While he lives, he must act; and every one is ordinarily engaged in some active pursuit, doing good, or doing evil. Hence the quaint maxim of the ancients, that "the devil will

set that man to work for him, who has nothing else to do." So essential, I add, is this activity, that men cannot, for any considerable length of time, be contented to remain inactive. Hence the ten thousand expedients to "kill time," (as it is sometimes called,) which are contrived and adopted by the idle and irreligious. They will endure exposure and fatigue, to hunt a squirrel, and rove from morning till evening, to see a robin die in agony. Hence, when men, who have been active and successful in worldly business. retire with the expectation of finding enjoyment in indolent leisure and freedom from care and labor. they usually become restless and unhappy. have not religion, to prompt them to deeds of piety, or lead them to engage in some benevolent enterprise. they generally plunge into exciting pleasures and deep dissipation, or gradually sink into a state of languor and stupidity, and soon fall into the grave. even the unavoidable decay and decrepitude of old age is often hastened on, by prematurely yielding to its clamors for rest and inactivity; and many lose the use of their muscles, and of their mental and moral powers, through indolence and voluntary inactivity. They grow old with increasing rapidity; because they think themselves too old to be active and useful; and they suffer their powers, both of body and mind to decay, by the mere neglect to use them and thus preserve their vigor. Thus natural is activity to man; and thus necessary is action to improve and even to preserve the powers of body or mind; and to secure the end for which they were granted to us by the Giver of every good gift.

Now, if this remark is true, in application to the preservation of bodily health, and mental vigor and improvement, it is no less true in respect to the religious affections; and the exercise of the active powers is no less necessary to spiritual attainments and growth in grace. The exhortation to diligence in our text, therefore, is peculiarly appropriate, and adapted to the nature and constitution of man. Indeed, as the apostle James says of faith, that, "without works it is dead;" so we may say, that the phrases "inactive piety," "inactive benevolence," and "religion without fruits unto holiness," are unmeaning expressions, mere solecisms in language.

That piety which does not move the affections, and engage all the energies of the soul in the service of God, is not Christian piety; it is the mere quietism, which originated in the dark ages, and is the fruit of the grossest superstition. And that benevolence, which does not warm the heart and move the hand, is not Christian benevolence; it is a mere sickly sympathy, a mere blind, fickle, childish sensibility, which springs from a corrupt heart and is cherished by a vain imagi-That religion, we may add, which consists in professions merely, which begins and ends in words, which is without energy and without action, is not the religion of the Bible; it is, if any persist in thus using the term, the religion of a "world lying in wickedness;" it belongs to the unconverted, to the selfrighteous, to those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

The exhortation of the text, it may be added, is not only adapted to the nature of man; but it is applicable to him, in every stage of religious life, from the moment of regeneration to the period of complete sanctification; from the implantation of the seed of grace in the soul, to its mature growth and perfection in glory.

. Some men have affected to consider religion, as an exception to the general rule, in the exercises of man; and have represented it as a mere matter of

experience and passive impressions, and not at all, of voluntary action, as in the common pursuits of life. And not a few have strenuously contended against the notion that a man is active, especially at the commencement of the divine life in the soul. seem to suppose, that God deals with men, as men do with machines; that he acts on mind by the same sort of influence, which is employed in the government and various changes of inert matter; that he impels and controls intellectual and moral agents by the same resistless power which he exerts, and according to the same fixed laws which he has established, to move and regulate the heavenly bodies. But not so is the subject represented in the Scriptures. there seen governing the universe of matter and of . mind, by influences and according to laws, adapted to the nature of the one and of the other. Matter is impelled by force. Mind is moved by motives. bodies are changed and controlled by chemical agencies and mechanical powers. Intelligent and moral agents are excited to action by considerations, addressed to the understanding and pressed upon the The former is subject to heart, and the conscience. the absolute control of necessity. The latter is sustained and assisted to act freely, and in accordance with the decisions of the judgment and the determinations of the will. And yet in both, the divine government is represented, as both universal and particular, and in both respects equally efficient; so that all creatures and all events are under his superintendence: so that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without him; so that we may rest secure in the assurance, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love him."

In the Scriptures of truth, man is exhibited as a free

agent in all his movements, as active in everything pertaining to life and godliness, as voluntary and free in all his moral exercises, as cooperating with God, and yielding to the kindly influences of the Holy Spirit in every step of the divine life; in regeneration Thus, while God promises to give and sanctification. a new heart, to those who offer the sacrifice of a broken heart; he directs them to seek him, with all the heart, and even to make to themselves a new heart. while God is said to give repentance; he commands all men, everywhere, to repent. Thus, while faith is expressly declared to be the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit, men are exhorted to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to the saving of their souls. language which, it seems to me, for ever settles the controversy of free agency and dependence, and shows the necessary cooperation of man with God, in his own 'salvation, an inspired apostle has said: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God, who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

II. I remark again, that the exhortation of the text, under consideration, may be illustrated, and the principle involved may be supported by reference to parallel and similar passages of holy Scripture: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do," says Solomon, "do it with thy might." So the apostle to the Gentiles, exhorts Christians at Rome, to be "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Again to the Hebrew converts, the same apostle says, including himself, while he exhorts his brethren according to the flesh: "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God; and this," he adds, "we

will do, if God permit." And in the same epistle, he repeats the exhortation in different words: "We desire, that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

All these exhortations to diligence and perseverance the apostle enforces by his own example, and the record of his own experience and resolution, where he says to the Philippians: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus."

So likewise, the author of our text, in the same epistle, and the same chapter, and almost in the very words of the text, urges the necessity of diligence to Christian attainments and the promised rewards of grace: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I might adduce other passages of Scripture in support of this sentiment. But I need not multiply proofs. It will be sufficient to add a single reference; and remark, that the doctrine, involved in the exhortation of the text, and the considerations, by which it is enforced, are fully and clearly brought to view in the parable of the talents; in which indolence and inactivity are condemned to wretchedness, whilst industry and acquisition are represented as going together, followed by a corresponding reward.

III. I remark once more, that the diligence, incul-

cated in our text, is in perfect keeping with all the instructions, derived from the analogy of nature and providence. Indeed, it seems to be an established law of nature and a settled order of Providence, that effort should precede acquisition, in all the employments and pursuits of life. In order to secure a desired end. appropriate means must be used; and to secure it readily and in good measure, they must be used diligently, and with energy and perseverance. the blessing of Heaven is necessary to crown our lawful labors with success; yet without labor and effort, this blessing is not to be expected. For example, though God gives the increase of the earth; yet the husbandman must labor diligently and wait patiently for the precious fruits. Before he can gather in the harvest, he must sow the seed and till the ground: and where this reasonable cultivation is neglected, the harvest will be deficient or entirely wanting. by the field of the slothful," says the wise man, "and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof; and the stone wall thereof was broken down." He adds: "Then I saw and considered it well; I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come, as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man." The truth illustrated by this reference to the slothful husbandman, is applicable to all the honest occupations and lawful pursuits of life. Everywhere, and in all useful occupations, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich;" while idleness will ultimately cover a man with rags, and reduce him and his family to hunger, or cast them into the arms of charity for support.

Now this general analogy, in temporal things, and the common employments of life, holds, likewise, in spiritual life and religious pursuits. He who does not seek, will not find. He who neglects the offered salvation, cannot escape the threatened destruction. He who does not strive, will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven. He who does not work out his own salvation, with fear and trembling, will never find God working in him to will and to do, nor obtain the blessings of peace and joy and eternal life. on the other hand, the man, who diligently and faithfully uses the means of grace, will ordinarily grow in grace; and will grow with a rapidity proportionate to his diligence and faithfulness. In language connected with our text, we may add, they who give all diligence, to add to their faith virtue and every Christian grace, will never fall; but will obtain a sure hope and a strong consolation, and finally "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

IV. I remark, finally, that all this instruction from reason, Scripture and analogy, corresponds with universal experience and general observation. Ask any experienced Christian, and he will bear witness to the truth of the doctrine, which we have attempted to establish and illustrate; and to the importance of the exhortation, which we have endeavored to enforce. He will tell you, that in his case he has always found it true, that spiritual improvement and religious enjoyment have corresponded very nearly with the degree of diligence and fidelity, with which he has discharged religious duty, and attended on the appointed and appropriate means of grace. He will add, that, when he has been watchful and constant in attending to the duties of the closet, the domestic altar and the house

of God; when he has studied the Bible daily, meditated and prayed often, kept the sabbath holy, and improved every opportunity for social prayer and public worship, he has found his views of spiritual things enlarged, his heart glowing with love to God and man, and his soul full of peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

But he will confess, and if this has often been his condition, with great humility and deep lamentation, that when he has been remiss in these duties, and inconstant and negligent in attending on the means of grace; when the hour of prayer and meditation has passed unheeded by, and he has been absent from his closet, or stupid in it; when his Bible has lain unopened and unread, like the perverted talent hid in a napkin: when the holiness of the sabbath has been forgotten, and the sacred rest of the day imperfectly observed; when public worship, the sabbath-school, and opportunities for religious instruction have been unnecessarily neglected; he will confess and make the confession with tears of regret, that he has had but little religious enjoyment, and made no spiritual improvement; he will acknowledge, that in these seasons of declension in duty, his hopes have generally been obscure, his views dark, his heart cold, and he has found nothing but "leanness in his soul."

The testimony of observation, on this subject, entirely concurs with the voice of experience. Have you ever known an indolent man become a Christian, a persevering Christian, without becoming, at the same time, an industrious man; "fervent in spirit, diligent in business, serving the Lord?" Did you ever know a man, whose industry and energy were so exhausted in the pursuits of the world, as to leave him no time for reading and prayer and attendance on the means

of grace, give much evidence of spiritual improvement or religious consolation and hope? Have you found those persons, who were seriously impressed, in seasons of revival, hold out in the service of God and the ways of holiness; unless they were diligent in the use of the means of grace, and constant in their attendance on religious instruction and religious worship? To how many might it be said, in the language of apostolic reproof: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you!" O how many, who had awakened in the minds of their friends a hope of their conversion, have fallen away, and been lost, through indolence and inattention to the means of grace and the ordinances of the gospel!

For myself, I have always observed, and I have had frequent opportunities to make the observation, in times of revival, especially among youth in a literary institution—I have always observed that the most industrious converts made the most eminent Christians; that an idle man, continuing idle, could not be a Christian, or for any considerable length of time, maintain a Christian hope; that those, who had been previously indolent, when they were converted, became industrious, or their professed conversion proved spurious; and their religion, like the morning dew and the early cloud, soon passed away.

In bringing this lecture and this series of lectures to a close, I have little more to say by way of application, than to repeat the language of the text; and express my ardent desire and humble hope, that the exhortation, with the extended comments and illustrations, may not be in vain to any one of us. It may, perhaps, be thought, that I have overrated the importance of the subject, or rather the circle of subjects, thus exhibited in connection. I cannot, however, but think

this mode of presenting the practical truths of the gospel the most profitable mode for those who feel the power of divine truth, and desire to become wise unto salvation.

In conclusion, then, let me entreat you all, my hearers, to review the whole subject, and make a faithful application of it to yourselves. Especially, forget not the indispensable importance of Christian diligence to holy progress and growth in grace. Henceforth, let every day, at a suitable hour, find you in your closets, with your Bible in hand; and let every sabbath bring you to the house of God, with minds inquiring after truth, and hearts open to receive the truth in the love of it. Forget not the stated prayer-meeting. Neglect not the sabbath-school and Bible-class. Embrace every opportunity for religious instruction and religious worship. Depend not, for religious improvement, on occasional efforts. Rely not, for your hopes of salvation, on a fitful religion, a periodical excitement, which goes and comes, like the ebbing and flowing tide. But "be ve steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as ye know, that your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord." "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."

## LECTURE XIII.

### CHRISTIAN DEVOTION OR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

#### JOHN IV. 24.

GOD IS A SPIRIT; AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM, MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.

This is language of incontrovertible authority; and the sentiment which it expresses, is as sublime as the authority is commanding. Passing through Samaria, our Saviour, who always condescended, when opportunity presented, to communicate instruction to all who were willing to be instructed concerning "the kingdom of God and his righteousness," met a woman of that country, at Jacob's well; and entered into familiar conversation with her, on the most important of all subjects to an immortal being, capable of moral obligation, and susceptible of happiness or misery. The whole conversation, as recorded in the chapter of our text, is peculiarly interesting; and the whole narrative may be often read with profit by all; and especially by those, who are subject to the influence of prejudice, and yet, like this woman of Samaria, possess an

<sup>\*</sup> This and some of the following discourses in this volume, might, perhaps, with more propriety, certainly more in accordance with the popular use of language, be denominated Sermons. But for the sake of a uniform title, I have thought it best to call them all Lectures. This discourse was originally delivered at the dedication of a Congregational Meeting-house in Monkton, Vt.

inquiring mind, and a heart open for the reception of truth.

But as the first part of the narrative has only a remote bearing on the subject proposed for this discourse. I shall recite that portion only which stands in immediate connection with our text: "The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place, where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall, neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship, ye know not what. We know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh. and now is: when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

That "God is a Spirit," self-existent and eternal, every where present, possessing almighty power and unlimited knowledge, perfectly holy, just and good, unchangeable in his nature and character, is a truth of the first importance in the system of Christian doctrines. It is a truth discoverable from the works of creation and providence, and taught with the utmost fulness and precision in the Scriptures; a truth, lying at the foundation of all genuine religious knowledge, and all correct religious principles and practice. It is not my intention, however, in this discourse, to dwell on that part of the text, in which this fundamental doctrine of religion is stated. But taking for granted, that all my hearers admit, and praying that all may feel and regard the solemn and interesting truth, that "God is a

Spirit;" I shall invite your attention to the practical inference, flowing from it, as expressed in the last clause of the text: "They that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

This statement furnishes a general answer to the inquiry, how the true worshipper of God is required to worship him, under the Christian dispensation? say under the Christian dispensation; not because the same sincerity of heart and spirituality of views were not required under the Jewish dispensation; for these were always requisite to constitute acceptable worship. Even then, appointed sacrifices, when offered with hypocrisy and mere formality, were pronounced "vain oblations," "an abomination unto the Lord." Even then: when it was asked. "wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? the answer was: "He hath showed thee. O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Even then it was settled, that sacrifices, to be acceptable to God, must be offered in sincerity, "with a humble and contrite spirite" that he would not hear the prayers, nor accept the thank-offering of those, who regarded and retained iniquity in their hearts, and worshipped him with feigned lips. Still under the former dispensation, many things, as to time, place and form, were definitely prescribed; and the observance of them made necessary, as a test of submission to divine authority.

But, under the Christian dispensation, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances is abolished." Still, the inquiry, what constitutes acceptable worship, is appropriate under the new dispensation; and the general answer, as I said, may be found in the latter clause of our text. A particular illustration of this

general statement, must therefore be profitable to all who wish to have definite views on this great subject of duty and happiness. I shall accordingly attempt such an illustration both negatively and positively.

I. Negatively. Under this general head of discourse, I remark in the first place, that the acceptableness of Christian worship depends neither on time nor place. Convenience, it must be admitted, requires that houses of a suitable form and size should be erected. for the accommodation of all who wish to unite in acts of social worship; and attend together on religious instruction. And the neatness and attractive appearance of these houses of public worship, exert a happy influence on the worshippers and the cause of religion. It must be admitted, likewise, such are the principles of association in the human mind, that great advantages may result from the practice of devoting such houses, as exclusively as possible, to religious purposes. Still, as "God is a Spirit," his presence is confined to no particular place. Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; how much less, then, temples built by human hands? The time has, indeed, come; when the true worship of Jehovah is confined neither to Jerusalem, nor to mount Geri-But in every place, he, that with a humble and believing heart calleth on the name of the Lord, shall be heard, accepted and saved. From the deepest dungeon and the most obscure cell, as well as from the consecrated temple, the cry of penitence and the song of praise may reach the ear of the Lord of Sabbaoth; and through the intercession of the great Mediator, become an acceptable sacrifice. searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, will regard the holy desires and the humble aspirations of every contrite soul; will accept the sincere services of every spiritual worshipper, wherever he is found engaged in acts of devotion. Our Lord himself has directed his followers to enter into their closets, and pray in secret to their Father who seeth in secret, with the assurance, that he will reward them openly. And to encourage social worship, at the family altar, and wherever a convenient place is found and a suitable occasion is furnished, he has said: "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" and again he has said: "If two or three shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, of my Father who is in heaven."

It is true, moreover, that a seventh part of time has been set apart, by divine command, for religious worship and instruction; and we are expressly required to view this consecrated season, as holy time; and to spend it in a manner best calculated to prepare us for the exercises and rest of heaven; of which, indeed, it is an appropriate emblem. To commemorate both the creation of the world and the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the children of Israel were directed to observe the *seventh* day of the week; and for this purpose, to keep it as a day of sacred rest and holy convocation.

But when the work of redemption was finished; a greater work than that of creation, having been thus performed; and a greater deliverance than that from Egyptian bondage, having been thus purchased, the first day of the week, the day on which Jesus burst the bars of death and was raised for our justification, became the appropriate day of holy rest. Accordingly, the apostles and primitive disciples, immediately after this event, (probably in obedience to a direction of the risen Saviour, and certainly with his approba-

tion,) began to meet on this day, for religious worship and spiritual communion. By this example and authority the practice was established, and has been continued in the Christian church; and "the Lord's day," the day consecrated by the resurrection of Christ, has become the Sabbath for man, the Christian Sabbath; possessing all the sacredness of that observed by the ancient church; commemorative, at once, of creating goodness and redeeming love. Indeed, the Sabbath, which had been incorporated with the temporary ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation, has thus been brought out of it, and presented to the Christian church in all its primitive simplicity; leaving behind all the stiffness and formality of the old dispensation, and entering into the new, with all the spirituality and benevolence and freedom from austerity, which Christianity everywhere inculcates, and which its blessed Author so beautifully exemplified. It is therefore to be henceforth observed as a day of sacred rest, as a stated season of public worship and religious instruction; till the church militant shall become triumphant, and the people of God shall enter into that rest, which remaineth for them, and of which the Sabbath on earth is a type.

When, therefore, we say, that the acceptableness of religious worship does not depend on time and place, we do not forget the design and importance of the Christian Sabbath, nor that religion cannot maintain its legitimate authority and exert its proper influence, where the sacredness of the Sabbath is violated, or disregarded. Indeed, experience has shown, that the care and fidelity with which individuals and families observe the Lord's day, and the constancy and punctuality, with which they attend on its appropriate exercises, mark with great accuracy their religious characters. And the degree of reverence for the Sabbath

and its solemn duties, which prevails in any community, is generally a true index to the religious sentiments and moral character of that community.

Show me a man, who does not remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy, who seldom or never attends public worship, who breaks the sacred rest of this day by devoting it to worldly business or vain amusements; and I will show you a man, who has not "the fear of God before his eyes." He may talk about religion, and pretend to feel a regard for its authority; but his religion is mere speculation, a sentiment, which "plays about the head, but comes not near the heart." The language of virtue may be on his tongue: and he may boast of his moral sentiments and feelings; but his morality is mere worldly policy; cold, calculating selfishness. His will is his conscience. His passions are his guide. He has no principles, on which reliance can be placed in the hour of temptation; no fears, of sufficient efficacy to restrain his corrupt desires; no hopes, which purify and elevate his soul.

Show me a family in which the Sabbath is disregarded, and I will show you a family in disorder; a family, growing up in rudeness and preparing for wretchedness; a family, which calls not on the name of the Lord, and upon which the curse of the Almighty rests. Show me a community, in which the Sabbath is generally desecrated, and I will show you a community of practical atheists, a community, over which the principles of the gospel exert little or no control, a community, in which the standard of morality is depressed nearly to a level with the customs and manners of the heathen world.

But notwithstanding the sanctity of the Sabbath; and the connection between a due observance of it and the acquisition of religious knowledge and the exercise

of religious principle; still, acceptable worship is by no means confined to this consecrated season. we admit, no religion, where there is no Sabbath; and no Sabbath, where public worship, with its appropriate rest from business and recreations, is not Still every pious soul, must and will, often exercise itself, in prayer, adoration and praise, with devout meditation, on other days and at other appropriate seasons. Indeed, while all the active and relative duties of social life are faithfully discharged no day, nor hour, is improperly or unprofitably spent, in the recollection of that mercy, which is everlasting, and that goodness which is unceasing; in the worship of that Being who is love; and who is unchangeably the same, vesterday, to-day, and for ever; in those acts of devotion, which constitute the employment of angels and the joys of heaven.

2. I observe, that the acceptableness of Christian worship depends not on any particular mode or prescribed form. Under the Jewish dispensation, sacrifices were appointed, the order of religious worship was established; and even the form and dimensions of the temple, with all its appendages, were prescribed by Jehovah himself. But, since all typical sacrifices have ceased to be necessary, as expressions of humiliation; since the antitype has been made manifest, and the great sacrifice been offered once for all; since "the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, has been abolished by the death of Christ," no peculiar mode of worship, or form of ecclesiastical organization, has been instituted by divine authority, and made essential to the acceptableness of divine service. The regulation of modes and forms is left to the discretion of each individual in his private devotions, and of each society in their social worship. Nor, in a judgment of charity, can there be any doubt, that there are true, spiritual worshippers of various denominations, presenting acceptable prayers and praises in various modes, and in a great variety of circumstances.

That there is no preference to be given to one mode of worship over another, charity by no means requires us to admit. That mode, which has the most direct and powerful tendency to fix the attention, raise the affections to Heaven, and excite and call forth the holy desires of a pious soul, is unquestionably the But nothing, except the blindest bigotry, or the most unconquerable prejudice, can induce us to consider the acceptableness of religious worship, as confined exclusively to any particular mode or form. And perhaps, the circumstances of education, habit, past experience, early associations, connection in social and domestic life, and even convenience resulting from local situation, under a steady regard to the glory of God and the spiritual good of our fellow-men, may render different modes most profitable for different Christians; and, often, even for the same Christians, at different periods, and in different circumstances of life.

In acts of secret devotion, one may audibly utter the pious sentiments of his soul; and another silently meditate on divine things, and, without using the organs of speech, raise the holy desires of his heart to God. One may stand praying before the Lord, another may kneel in his presence, a third may bow before the mercy-seat, and a fourth may prostrate himself at the foot of the throne of grace. All these positions, for worship, are mentioned in the sacred Scriptures; and probably there are those, who adopt these several positions in their secret devotions; and find,

from experience and habit, that it is profitable for them, thus to appear before the Lord.

In public worship, there is room for the same variety of mode and form; and different modes and various forms may be adopted and practised by different worshipping assemblies, with the same sincerity of heart and spirituality of mind. Whether, in social prayer, one only shall speak; and thus become the organ of every petitioner, the "mouth of all the pious," in the assembly; or whether an established form of words shall be used, and the whole assembly occasionally join in repeating a portion of those words, is a question, not of prescription or command; but of utility, of edification, of expediency. To decide, which of these modes of worship is to be preferred, we have only to consider, which, in existing circumstances, best answers the great purpose of public worship; which is best calculated, to excite the attention, raise the devout affections, and call forth the holy aspirations of the pious soul? It is, therefore, a question, which will, in all probability, be differently decided, not merely by bigots and fanatics and cavillers; but by sincere and humble worshippers, according to their best experience and most careful observation, connected with the peculiar circumstances, in which they are respectively placed.

On this subject, and indeed on every subject which relates to the modes and forms of religion, the apostolic exhortation is appropriate: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth." We should contend, not for the form, but for the power of godliness. We should strive, not to make proselytes to this or that sect of worshippers, but to maintain the faith once de-

livered to the saints," to defend and illustrate the great doctrines and holy precepts of the gospel, which are received and cherished by the truly pious, in different communions; but rejected and perverted by the impenitent portion of every denomination. We should remember, that "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but a new creature;" that neither names, nor forms, nor any external circumstances constitute a Christian, but "faith which works by love." Adopting in part the language of Pope; but correcting his latitudinarian sentiment, I add:

For modes and forms let senseless bigots fight; His worship can't be wrong, whose heart is right.

Nor can it be viewed by an enlightened mind, as at all important, whether our social prayers and praises be offered standing, or kneeling, or bowing; provided there be order and uniformity of practice through the whole assembly; and provided all place themselves in a natural, humble posture, and close their hearts, (I had almost said their eyes, their every sense,) against the world and its intruding objects. But order, uniformity and decency of attitude, and a position favorable to wakeful attention and activity of mind, with solemn stillness, are surely important, if not indispensable to acceptable public worship, and to the highest and best effect in all united acts of devotion. should, therefore, wherever we attend on the worship of God, in connection with others, demean ourselves with decency and propriety, as to attitude and every movement; we should scrupulously conform to the established order, and comply with the accustomed forms and usages.

II. Our first positive remark is, that all true worship-

pers, under the Christian dispensation, worship God in spirit, with a spiritual mind, with a humble and contrite spirit, enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit. "The carnal mind," said an apostle, "is enmity against God: it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." "If I regard iniquity in my heart," said the Psalmist. "the Lord will not hear me." "The sacrifices of the wicked," said Solomon, "are an abomination unto the Lord." And our Saviour himself has decided, that we "cannot serve God and mammon." While we continue impenitent, therefore, while our affections are fixed supremely on things below, while we love the creature more than the Creator, and the praise of man more than the praise of God, more than that honor which cometh from God alone: while we habitually disregard the authority of Heaven, and live in the known and allowed violation of the divine commands, we cannot worship God in spirit; nor will our external acts of devotion be acceptable in his sight. "He looketh not on the outward appearance; but on Though we should occasionally "draw the heart." nigh unto him with our mouth, and honor him with our lips;" if our "hearts are far from him," he will "despise our image," and reject our feigned service.

The prayers of those, who regard not the authority of God, in their habitual deportment, who have no genuine submission to his will, no complacency in his character, nor any confidence in his government and promises, are at best unmeaning words, empty sounds, a form of godliness without the power.

So likewise, the praises of those, who daily take the name of God in vain, out of whose mouth proceed both blessing and cursing, must be destitute of spirituality, must be unaccompanied by that inward reverence and those holy emotions of soul, which can alone render our praises acceptable to a heart-searching God.

Indeed, every external act of devotion, which does not arise from a humble and believing heart, must be cold, formal, hypocritical and vain. It is only the effectual, fervent, or spiritual prayer of the righteous man. which availeth much. Hence we are directed to ask for the influences of the Holy Spirit, to help our infirmities, and teach us how to pray. And, to encourage us to make this first petition, our Saviour has assured us, that this spiritual assistance shall be given to all, who ask for it, in his name; yes, that God is even more ready to grant his Holy Spirit to those who ask for it, under a feeling sense of their dependence and of their need of divine assistance, than parents are to give good things to their children. Hence too, an apostle exhorts Christians, to "be filled with the Spirit, speaking to themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts unto God," "singing with the spirit and the understanding."

2. I remark again, under the second general head of discourse, that truth, or sincerity, is necessary to the acceptableness of Christian worship. To render our acts of devotion acceptable to Him, who require th truth in the inward part, we must worship not only in spirit, but in truth. We must not only possess a Christian temper generally, and maintain an habitual Christian character; we must not only have hearts renewed by divine grace, minds enlightened with the knowledge of God, and wills submissive to his will; but our Christian graces must be in exercise, at the time; we must pray in faith, and sing praises under the influence of grateful emotions; we must worship, as I said, not only in spirit, but in truth, with sincerity, having the

thoughts collected, the affections elevated, and all the faculties of the soul engaged.

We may add, and the remark is applicable to both the qualities of spirituality and sincerity, that wherever there is true and spiritual worship, it must be presented in some form, after some mode; yet the form is nothing without the substance, nor is the mode anything without the spirituality. The true worshippers of God, therefore, must through faith in Christ, be reconciled to him; must, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, be convinced of sin, led to repentance and brought into a state of habitual obedience to divine authority. And, in addition to all this, they must, whenever they engage in worship, come to the exercise with all their hearts, clothed with humility, warmed with gratitude and love, relying with filial confidence on the divine promises, and casting themselves, without reserve, on the sovereign wisdom and mercy of God.

A few practical remarks will close the discourse.

1. I remark, that our subject, forcibly enjoins upon us the apostolic exhortation: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." For it illustrates in one important branch of duty, the general statement, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and the no less comprehensive declaration: "He that cometh to God must believe, that he is; and that he is a rewarder of them, that diligently seek him." Nor, in this examination, should we forget the only name given among men, whereby we must be saved, Jesus Christ, the only mediator, through whom we can find access to the mercy-seat, and obtain pardon and grace.

Let us, henceforth, never rest satisfied with the externals of religion, of whatever form or character; nor consider ourselves, as the true worshippers of God, merely because we have assumed the badges of Christianity, attached ourselves to some particular sect of Christians, and engaged in the external observance of Christian worship, according to some established or approved mode. Let us not speak peace to our souls, merely because we have "a name to live," and occasionally "draw nigh unto God with our mouth, and honor him with our lips." Let us remember, that something more, than all this, is necessary to render us "accepted in the beloved."

It is not want of charity, therefore, as some would persuade you to believe, it is the voice of reason and common sense, which declares, and compels us to say, that those, who neglect the sanctuary, the family altar, and the closet of devotion, do not truly worship God, are not his adopted children, cannot without a change of character, join in the worship and participate in the joys of heaven.

But although the power of godliness cannot exist without some form; still it becomes us to guard, with the utmost diligence and watchfulness, against resting in a mere form; against trusting to a dead faith, connected with a lifeless formality. While we are assured, that those who entirely neglect the worship of God, are under condemnation; let us not forget, that all external worship, which is not offered in spirit and in truth, is vain and empty pageantry. Before we indulge the hope, that our prayers and our praises are favorably heard and regarded in heaven, let us see to it, that our hearts are right with God, that our spirits are humble, our wills submissive and our affections purified and fixed on things above. Let us review our habitual conduct; try our principles and sentiments; scrutinize our motives of action; and bring our whole characters, with every secret thought and emotion, into judgment; and thus anticipate the judgment of the great day.

2. I remark that the view which we have taken of the subject, leads us to anticipate with joy, and seek to hasten on, with ardent desire and zealous effort, the predicted period; when the views of Christians shall be greatly enlarged, and all narrow prejudices swept away, when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, shall love one another, with a pure heart fervently.

Finally; I remark, that our subject points us to the worship of heaven, as an example, for our imitation; and places it before the eye of faith, as an object of strong desire. It brings the advanced Christian into a "strait betwixt two," and renders him willing to "depart and be with Christ;" where the redeemed out of every nation, meet in perfect harmony, and without a discordant note, unite in holy worship and endless praise; singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb; saying: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints." "Hallelujah; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God, for ever and ever."—AMEN.

# LECTURE XIV.

## CHRISTIAN COURTESY.

### 1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 4, 5.

CHARITY VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF, IS NOT PUFFED UP, DOTH NOT BEHAVE
ITSELF UNSEEMLY, SEEKETH NOT HER OWN.

It has been asked: "Is there any such thing, as disinterested benevolence?" Now, the proper answer to this and all similar inquiries, is one, which will not only show the erroneous sentiments of the inquirer, but expose the absurdity of the inquiry itself. The best mode of answering, is to inquire in turn: "Is there any such thing as interested or selfish benevolence?" Indeed, the whole controversy, concerning what is called the selfish system of morals, not only implies error: but involves complete absurdity and absolute contradiction. For the very idea of benevolence excludes, altogether, the notion of self-interest, or exclusive regard to one's self. Benevolence regards solely the good of others. "Charity seeketh not her own." The term, properly used, denotes a feeling or principle of action, directly opposed to selfishness. It implies a disposition to do good to the object of action, irrespective of all consequences to the actor. is a generous, expansive, diffusive spirit. It has noth-

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was prepared and delivered at Washington, March, 1840, and with some modifications, it has been delivered as a lecture, in several other places.

ing contracted or exclusive in its nature. Benevolence is not, indeed, inconsistent with self-love, which is, likewise an original and legitimate principle of action; and yet each is perfectly distinct in its nature But to selfishness, benevolence is and operations. directly opposed, and is entirely inconsistent with it. We may admit, indeed, with Pope, that, "Selflove and social are the same." If not the same. they are surely consistent with each other; and they may act harmoniously, producing, when they thus act, the happiest results. We are required to love our neighbor, not to the exclusion, but according to the measure of self-love; as we love ourselves. But the same thing cannot be said of the relation between selfishness and benevolence. They never act harmoniously. The former, wherever it exists, absolutely excludes the latter. For it limits and restrains the expanding desires of the heart; and directs and controls all the energies of the mind. It closes the hand of charity; and drinks up the very sympathies of the soul. Benevolence, on the other hand, enlarges the heart, opens the hand, and purifies and elevates all the tender sympathies of human nature. It is good will to men, a disposition to do good, a desire to communicate happiness; it is that charity which seeketh not her own.

If any, however, will persist in denying the distinction between self-love and selfishness; and thus continue to confound benevolence with self-interest, they must, of course, lose all distinction between virtue and vice; and ultimately destroy, in their own minds, the very foundation of just rewards and punishments, and even of approbation and blame. They must view all voluntary actions as proceeding directly or indirectly from a single principle, from the same exclusive re-

gard to self; and therefore must consider them equally destitute of every quality, which can entitle them to the distinction of moral good and evil.

It must be admitted, however; and we rejoice that we are able to state the fact and make the admission, that it is impossible to do good, to exercise true benevolence, without securing to ourselves the rewards of virtue, and being made comparatively happy; or, on the other hand, to do evil, to indulge a spirit of entire selfishness, without bringing on ourselves the consequences of this exclusive principle, and becoming comparatively wretched. For God has constituted an indissoluble connection, on the one hand, between virtue and happiness, or confirmed holiness and eternal felicity; and, on the other, between vice and misery, or unforsaken sin and everlasting wretchedness.

It must be admitted, too, that, in consequence of this established law in the moral constitution of man and the moral government of God; men may not always be able perfectly to analyze their actions, trace each to its true motive, and thus learn "what spirit they are of," by what principles they are governed, what are the predominant traits of their own characters, in the view of Him, who "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men."

But notwithstanding the coincidence between rational self-love and true benevolence, which produces so much mixture of motive in human actions, and so often causes great perplexity in seasons of self-examination; a truly benevolent man will find occasions for action, on which he may try himself, and learn the character and strength of his principles; may, from a consciousness of the motives which prompt him to action, and of the settled desires which govern his move-

ments, become acquainted with himself and understand his own character; may be fully persuaded, that benevolence, in coincidence with self-love, but in opposition to selfishness, reigns within; that he "loves his neighbor, as himself;" and strives to "do unto others as he would that they should do unto him."

That there are men who are exclusively selfish in their feelings, and who act entirely under the influence of selfish motives, and a regard to their own interest, irrespective of the happiness of others, is certainly not to be denied. For the Scriptures represent mankind, in their natural, unrenewed state, as destitute of holiness, alienated from the life of God, absolutely and entirely depraved, living altogether to themselves, (except in cases where they are restrained and moved by mere instinct and animal sympathy.) asking not what is duty, what is the will of God, how they may do good and communicate happiness; but simply and exclusively inquiring, who will show them any good, how they shall best accomplish their own purposes, and most effectually secure their own private ends and personal aggrandizement.

That impenitent sinners, unrenewed men, who, in the figurative and highly descriptive language of inspiration, are said to be "dead in tresspasses and sins," should contend that selfishness is the only principle of human action, is not therefore strange. Indeed, while they judge others by themselves, and neglect the testimony of the Scriptures on the subject, they cannot be expected to come to a different conclusion. For this accords with their whole experience; and against the decisions of experience, of consciousness, of feeling, it is in vain to reason. Those only, who have a more enlarged experience, who have been renewed

by the Holy Spirit, and have had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, feel the promptings of enlightened benevolence; and they alone can be expected clearly to understand and promptly to admit this great doctrine of Christian ethics; this fundamental distinction, which the Scriptures have made between virtue and vice, between sin and holiness.

There is, indeed, a sort of common sense, or universal moral feeling, or natural conscience; which, as far as it extends, fully accords with the decisions of inspiration on the subject; and which, without the aid of reason, or rather I should say, when left unembarrassed by the sophistry of human reason, comes in to sanction this broad distinction between actions, founded on a view of motives and principles. Hence the strongest professions, and the most splendid external acts of patriotism and charity, are stripped of their assumed merit; and by common consent, viewed with contempt and disgust, the moment they can be clearly traced to mere selfish motives. Just in proportion as we believe a man to act from disinterested motives, we instinctively view him as virtuous, and at once approve and admire his character; and just in proportion as we discover, that the apparent virtues of any one are assumed for the sake of appearance, are the mere garb of hypocrisy, or the result of worldly policy, we withdraw our approbation from him, and despise his character. And this we may consider as the voice of God, in man; the testimony of unsophisticated reason or common sense, in opposition to the deductions of an understanding blinded by sin, and perverted by prejudice.

Still the only satisfactory views on this subject, are those, which are derived directly from the Scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony," therefore, it becomes us to repair, as the only standard of truth and These assure us, that "charity is the end of the commandment;" that "love is the fulfilling of the law;" that love to God and love to man embraces the whole of religion, and furnishes the fundamental principle of all duty; so that "on the two great commandments," by which it is inculcated, "hang all the law and the prophets." They teach us, that "every one, who loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God;" while "he, that loveth not, knoweth not God," who is essentially love itself; and that he, who loveth God, must They place love or charity so · love his brother also. completely and universally at the foundation of all the duties of piety and virtue, that without it, all professions and appearances of these duties are empty sound and unsubstantial form. They show us clearly, that living to God and living to ourselves imply opposite states, that benevolence and selfishness are antagonist principles, altogether inconsistent with each other; or, as this great practical doctrine is beautifully expressed in the last clause of our text: "Charity seeketh not her own."

In the chapter containing our text, the apostle gives us a full and minute description of the great principle of love or charity, in its various characteristics and operations, as a social principle in the renewed heart. I am not, however, about to discourse abstractly and generally on the subject. And I have given this introductory disquisition, on the last clause of the text, for the sake of introducing, with more effect, that branch of the subject, to which I wish, during the remainder of the discourse, to direct your particular attention, as it is suggested in the first part of the text: "Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly."

The distinct subject thus suggested, and now before us, is therefore Christian Courtesy, or, in familiar language, Politeness. This may appear to some a subject too diminutive and unimportant for a public religious discourse. But I trust, that I have already vindicated its dignity, by showing its connection with the fundamental principle of all virtue and religion; by bringing it before you as a branch, a distinct and essential branch, of benevolence or Christian charity. sists, indeed, in the habitual exercise of a spirit of kindness, producing gentleness of speech and suavity of manners, regulating and modifying the daily and diversified intercourse of social and civilized life. And I hope to be able to show, before I close the discourse. that it is a subject, not without dignity and importance, on account of its highly practical character; that it exerts an extensive influence on society and human happiness; and is, therefore, worthy of the deliberate consideration of the philosopher and the Christian.

Let it be remembered, then, as we proceed in the discourse, that we are not degrading this sacred service, nor desecrating this holy day, by introducing here a subject of mere human policy; such as the empty ceremonies of courts, the intriguing arts of diplomacy, the hollow-hearted professions of false honor, or the foppery and mere etiquette of the multitude, who have no other rule of action, than the whims of fancy, or the caprice of fashion. Let it not be forgotten, that the courtesy, of which we speak, is Christian courtesy; that the politeness, of which we treat, is a modification of the great principle of love, is a branch of Christian charity, is "benevolence in little things," benevolence, producing kind treatment and seemly deportment, in every condition of life, and towards all mankind; that it is a disposition to diffuse happiness

through the whole circle, in which it moves; exhibiting everywhere, and at all times, a spirit of kindness, civility, gentleness, and propriety of deportment.

To the remarks, already made on the general subject of charity or Christian benevolence, little need be added, to exhibit the true character, and show the natural operations, of the modified principle, which we denominate courtesy or politeness. For it has already been said, in announcing this branch of the general subject, that more is meant, than is often understood by the indefinite use of these terms; that much more is implied, than mere profession, etiquette and formal compliance with the demands of custom and fashion. Indeed, such profession, etiquette and formality may consist with a complete destitution of the very principle inculcated in the chapter of our text; and for which we contend, as the fundamental principle of every social virtue and all true religion.

Mere form, without substance, is, indeed, always useless, or worse than useless. This is true, for example, of civil government. Here the form may exist, and the name be retained, long after the spirit has fled, and the end of all legitimate authority is lost. You may have the name and forms of republicanism, and the institutions which promise liberty and security; and yet be subjected to the most unrelenting and oppressive tyranny; or be deprived of all protection, and left to the misrule of licentiousness and anarchy.

The same is true, likewise, of religion and devotion. Accordingly an inspired apostle speaks of some, who have the form of godliness, while they deny the power thereof. Our Saviour, too, applies to the Pharisees of his time the prophetic description: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from

me." Indeed, the Scriptures everywhere condemn hypocrisy, in every degree and of every species; and pronounce the religion of those, who rely on forms and ceremonies, or, (if I may so speak without irreverence,) on the mere etiquette and trappings of religion, as vain or worse than vain, as mockery and sin.

In applying these illustrations, we may add, that a man without kindness of feeling or sincerity of heart, may, in subserviency to the tyranny of fashion, with motives purely selfish, and even with duplicity and malice, go through the forms of common civility; may, indeed, distinguish himself for an excessive, and sometimes even troublesome and offensive adherence to the literal prescriptions of fashion, and the arbitrary rules of etiquette. Now such a man may properly be denominated a hypocrite in manners. He is certainly destitute of the principle, which he claims to possess, of Christian courtesy, of that "charity, which doth not behave itself unseemly;" which is kind and frank, and free from guile; which conducts with uniform propriety and in a manner adapted to the varying circumstances and relations of age, character, time and place.

But notwithstanding the truth of these remarks; though it is true, that form is useless, without substance, and appearance vain, without reality; yet it is equally true, that substance cannot exist without form, nor reality be exhibited without appearance. Here again, we may refer to civil government and religious worship for illustration. Government cannot exist, public authority cannot be exercised, without some form, some general rules of administration, some mode of delegating power and regulating its exercise. To secure, to any degree, the benefits of civil government, there must be some established method of drawing

forth and expressing the public will, of concentrating the scattered elements of sovereign authority; and bringing them, when thus united, to bear in turn, on individual will and action, and thus to afford protection to personal liberty, life and property. Nor can a spirit of devotion be maintained and cultivated without some rites of worship; without some prescribed or admitted form, for its due exercise.

The same thing is true, with regard to the subject before us, with regard to the ten thousand little civilities, acts of charity and expressions of gratitude and kindness and sympathy, which flow continually from a well established principle of Christian courtesy; which crowd upon every happy domestic circle and fill up the daily intercourse of all good society. True benevolence cannot long exist; certainly cannot gather strength and become mature, without the conventional forms of social intercourse; and ordinarily its cultivation and improvement depend more on these little, but frequently occurring expressions of kindness, than on the more splendid acts of charity, which it occasionally produces, dazzling and confounding a gazing world.

Let it never be forgotten, then, that Christian courtesy, or true politeness, flows from a spirit of habitual kindness, a steady and cherished disposition to communicate happiness, a heart under the influence of divine grace and glowing with love and good will to man. It is, as we said before, a modification of benevolence, "benevolence in little things;" benevolence always alive and always active; benevolence existing, not as a passion or emotion merely; but as a principle, inwrought into the soul, and always ready to every good word and work.

We may add, in order to delineate its peculiar char-

acteristics, that Christian courtesy is distinguished from the false-named politeness of the world, in that it is more uniform, embracing a larger number of objects, with less display and fewer pretensions to merit. distinguished from the ceremony and etiquette prescribed by the arbitrary laws of worldly honor, in that it regards, as originally equal, and treats with equal kindness, all ranks of society and all classes of men. It has no respect of persons; but renders to all their due, with the same desire of pleasing all, so far as it can be done consistently with their real and permanent good, and with truth and justice to others. It is distinguished from the diplomatic arts of courts and cabinets, and from the hollow-hearted professions of political demagogues, in that it is always sincere, frank, and without disguise; speaking what it thinks, and acting in accordance with what it speaks. It is distinguished from the awkwardness and vulgarity of the clown and the boor, in that it does not needlessly and carelessly disregard the established forms of social intercourse; nor rudely break up the accustomed course of associated feeling and sentiment; nor wantonly offend good taste, causing modesty to blush and piety to weep. distinguished, finally, from the churlishness of the misanthrope, in that it does not sullenly forbear to speak and obstinately refuse to act, for the sake of singularity; or lest it should add to the entertainment of friends, and promote the joys of social life.

We may add, once more, and with a special view of showing its natural operations, that Christian courtesy regards all the relations of life, and accommodates itself to all the objects of its regard. "It vaunteth not itself," above those around; but esteems others according to their merits. "It is not puffed up" with pride; nor does it treat the unfortunate, or even the

erring, with supercilious contempt. "It doth not behave itself unseemly" toward any; but it conducts with propriety, and in a manner suited to their respective characters and stations, toward superiors, inferiors and equals; becoming "all things to all men;" and adapting its language and deportment to the relation which it sustains to every man, with whom it is called to hold intercourse.

Superiors, from whatever cause that superiority arises, it always treats with respect. Thus the relations of parents, of civil rulers, of age and rank, it readily recognizes and carefully regards. A single instance will illustrate the general principle. bred youth, of correct views and cultivated sentiments, always seems happy in yielding the place of honor to age; and manifests peculiar pleasure, whenever opportunity is presented, for paying respectful attention to those, who have preceded him in the path of life, and are already withdrawing from the stage of In his view, "the hoary head, if found in the way of righteousness, is a crown of glory." The same thing is true; and the sentiment is felt with peculiar force, when to this relation is added the endearing relation of parent, or the responsible relation of civil office.

I know, it is said to be the tendency of republican institutions to diminish this respect for age, and office, and ancestry. However this may be, as a general fact, it certainly is not a necessary consequence of liberty and free institutions. It is rather an incidental effect of liberty, abused and degenerated into licentiousness; of free institutions, undermined and ready to fall. It must be admitted, however; and it is greatly to be lamented, that the prevalence of party-spirit, attended as it often is, with bitter altercation and opprobrious lan-

guage, is in our country exerting a debasing and corrupting influence on the morals and manners of the community, and especially of the rising generation. The evil, indeed, calls for the deliberate consideration and energetic interposition of the patriot and Christian; lest all decency of language and courtesy of manners, and with them all the charities which meliorate the condition of society and soften the asperities of life, should be lost to succeeding generations. For this respect for age, and office, and established character, cannot be destroyed, without a consequent diminution of the spirit of patriotism and benevolence; and ultimately, I fear, an entire subversion of all our free institutions.

Christian courtesy, we may add once more, as already intimated, is not confined to those, who go before us and stand above us. In its operations, it reaches those who are below and behind us. It treats, with kindness and condescension, inferiors, the young and the obscure, those who are called to occupy the humblest stations in life, and perform the most laborious services of society.

There are some, who make high pretensions to honor, and are extremely sensitive on the subject of social intercourse, so far as the conduct of others toward them is concerned, and so far as their own conduct regards equals and superiors; who, nevertheless, not only treat with neglect, but affect to despise and view with supercilious contempt, all whom they choose to consider below their rank in life, and unworthy of their companionship.

Now, of all the objects of disgust which this world affords, there is none more worthy of it, none more likely to excite it, in a truly benevolent mind, than a man who suffers himself to be "puffed up" with pride,

on account of the little brief distinctions of life. That man is, indeed, an object of disgust, who, because he is elevated by wealth, or equipage, or authority, or even by supposed intellectual endowments, looks down, with haughty contempt, on those, who happen to occupy some inferior sphere, or walk in some humbler path. Far different from this is the conduct of the enlightened and well-bred man, of Christian principle. However distinguished by age, or office, or wealth, or rank, he never despises others who have been less favored in the distribution of the gifts of Providence. Neither age, nor sex, nor rank, nor color, can deprive a human being of his kindness, his candor, his sympathy, his benevolent regards. For he possesses that "charity, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly."

With reference to the operations of this principle among equals in age, companions in life and associates in business, though not less important to human happiness and virtuous character. I need not detain you with particular illustrations. For here its dictates are more readily observed, and its claims to attention are more generally acknowledged and deeply felt. Besides, the illustrations already given, may be easily extended, and applied with little variation to these intermediate, as well as to the other and extreme relations of life. Even among companions and equals, common civilities cannot be neglected without diminishing the happiness of social intercourse, without counteracting and ultimately destroying the labors of benevolence. Nor can human laws, or the laws of honor, or any other rules of action, even among friends and companions, supply the place of Christian courtesy.

How important, then, is it, that this spirit should be

more assiduously cultivated and more extensively diffused! How important to the peace and harmony of society; and to the character and happiness of every individual member of the great community!

Would you "live in peace with all men," you must be courteous to all; and this in all ordinary cases will secure the object of your desire, and permit you to reap the blessed fruits. For he who, under the influence of the spirit of Christian courtesy, treats superiors with respect, inferiors with kindness and condescension, and equals with all that attention and civility of deportment, which good sense and benevolent feelings always produce, secures to himself the highest and purest enjoyments of social life. His happiness is thus promoted; both because the exercise of a kind and courteous spirit carries along with it complacency and satisfaction; and because it procures for him, who possesses it, reciprocal respect, attention and acts of kindness: because it carries, in its hand, its own reward.

True politeness, Christian courtesy, always makes its possessor, not only a better member of society, but a happier man; while the want of it never fails to subject those who disregard its wholesome laws, to inconvenience and mortification; and sometimes, even to infamy and wretchedness. For saith the Scripture: "He that hath friends, must show himself friendly:" and again: "He that taketh the sword, shall per-In accordance with these maxims ish by the sword." of inspiration, we may add, he who treats all with the attention and courtesy which their respective relations to him demand, will ordinarily receive, in return, corresponding treatment; while he who disregards these relations in his social intercourse, will find a spirit of retaliation abroad in the world; will sooner or later

meet with those who are disposed to measure to him again the same measure which he has meted out to others.

But after all, the importance of Christian courtesy is best discovered by taking a view of its general influence on social intercourse and the peace and happiness of society; by considering the facilities which it affords its possessor for doing good in the world.

Would you induce those, who by age, or character, or station, have acquired influence, to aid you in the accomplishment of some object near your heart, you must secure their attention, conciliate their favor and gain their confidence, by a suitable deportment and becoming language, by a frank but respectful address, by those civilities which, on account of their age and character, they have a right to expect. Should you, on the contrary, approach them abruptly; disregarding the appropriate forms of social intercourse, manifesting a spirit of pride and self-importance, in a manner careless and uncouth and with language of disrespect or reproach, you would certainly fail of being so heard as to recommend your object, however worthy of patronage.

Nor is Christian courtesy less important, if you would exert a salutary influence over inferiors, in forming their characters and inducing them to do good and be happy. Parental authority, indeed, whether retained in the hands of parents or delegated to others may, and sometimes should, command, and thus restrain the evil propensities of youth. So likewise the arm of civil power must frequently be raised to punish and prevent crime. But more, much more, especially in forming characters positively virtuous, and securing actions positively good, may be accomplished by the influence which results from the exer-

cise of a spirit of kindness and condescension, from Christian courtesy.\*\*

The importance of Christian courtesy, among equals, is even more apparent. For besides the influence, which it exerts here, in common with that towards superiors and inferiors; its bearing on the happiness, which results from social intercourse, from friendship and companionship, is peculiar and striking. It purifies and elevates the joys of friendship; and it would, if duly exercised, prevent, or remove, or at least mitigate, those cruel animosities among offended companions and alienated friends, which cause more than half the ills of human life; and which, where they exist, and are indulged without restraint, rage with peculiar virulence. For, "a brother offended is harder to be won, than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." Nine times out of ten, where friends disagree, where brethren fall out by the way, there is fault on both sides. If either party would exhibit the Christian character, in all its forbearance, in all its candor, in all its forgiving spirit, in all its meekness, gentleness, loveliness; in a word, in all its courtesy, resentment would be disarmed, and animosity subdued. It has been very justly observed, that it is difficult, if not impossible, for one party to originate, keep alive, and carry forward, both sides of a quarrel. As, in order to produce tender and enduring friendship,

## Heart must meet heart, Reciprocally soft,

<sup>\*</sup> It has been said; if you would confer essential benefit on the ignorant and thoughtless portion of the community, "you must cheat them into it." However this may be, it is certain, that you cannot force it upon them. Nor is there much hope from simple appeals to reason. The only expedient, therefore, which promises success, seems to be, to allure them to virtue and happiness, by kind and affable treatment; by the ten thousand little civilities and marks of attention, which Christian courtesy never fails to suggest to an ingenuous mind.

so, enmity or resentment will languish and die for want of nutriment, unless it finds a heart, in some measure, cruel and malignant like its own.

The only plausible pretence for the custom of duelking, even upon worldly principles, is drawn from a condition of society, which Christian courtesy would immediately change.\* For who, that possessed that charity, which "doth not behave itself unseemly," would ever give occasion for fixed resentment to the nicest sense of honor; and who, under the influence of that charity, which "vaunteth not itself," would persevere in his demands of reparation for an unintentional injury? Or, to express the same thing in other words, Christian courtesy, or true politeness, in language and deportment, can neither intentionally give offence, nor receive and retain it, where it was evidently not intended to be given.

Do you say, that this is a departure from my subject; that the region, upon which I have now entered, is not the region of courtesy, but the field of honor; that the decision of questions to which I have here alluded, falls not within the province of religion, or moral philosophy; but belongs exclusively to a peculiar branch of the rules of social intercourse, entirely distinct from the common maxims of general ethics. to the laws of honor? My answer is, that I have not so read my Bible; nor so learned the laws of God, as they are inscribed upon the human heart, and developed by the unperverted operations of reason and conscience. Nor can I view the conclusion to which I am coming, as such a departure. On the contrary, it has all along been my intention thus to apply my subject; and if possible, to restore the term honor to its

<sup>\*</sup> The appropriateness of these remarks will be seen, when it is stated, that about the time of the preparation and delivery of this discourse in the Hall of Representatives, two duels between members of Congress, were daily expected.

original meaning; and redeem the subject involved from disgrace.

Honor does belong to ethics, to religion, peculiarly and in the best sense to Christianity. Yes, "glory, honor, and immortality" are, at once, its essential attributes and its high reward. I have not, therefore, departed from my subject. For while I have been speaking of courtesy, I have, by implication, been treating of honor, "that honor, which cometh from God" and leads to heaven. And I might, without much injury to the argument, have changed the term courtesy for honor, in announcing the subject of discourse. Yes, my hearers, courtesy is honor; without honor, religion would be deprived of her brightest charms; and human life would be, but a scene of low intrigue and perpetual turmoil. I would not live in such a world:

I cannot tell what you and other men Think of this life; but for my single self, I had as lief not be, as live to be In awe of such a thing as I myself.

Had the poet possessed a little more of the spirit of the gospel, in connection with the inspiration of genius, he would have added: 'I had as lief not be, as live to do the thing I do despise; to do to others the thing I would not have them do to me; to be or do, what would seem wrong and mean, when seen in other men.'

This, my friends, is honor, true honor; the honor which Christianity sanctions; and, wherever it exists, it will produce Christian courtesy. It will not vaunt itself. It will not behave itself unseemly. It is not like that false honor, which forgets the claims of others, in its zeal to vindicate its own fancied rights. It is not that sensitiveness to injury, which leaves no

room for the calls of duty. It is a quick and lively sense of right, directed not by exclusive selfishness; but by a rational self-love, modified by benevolence. It takes an interest in the reputation, and respects the feelings, and regards the character, of others, as well as its own. If it is not courtesy itself, it is coincident with it, and inseparable from it.

Would you, then, secure to yourself the highest benefits of social intercourse; and render your intercourse with others conducive to their happiness; cherish feelings of honor; be courteous and kind; be courteous to all, at all times, in all places; cultivate that charity, which "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. doth not behave itself unseemly." "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." And if I had the authority and could exhibit the example of an apostle, I would add: "Those things, which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do: And the God of peace shall be with you."

# LECTURE XV.

## CHRISTIANITY A RELIGION OF PEACE.

#### LUKE II. 14.

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON BARTH PEACE; GOOD WILL TOWARD MRN.

"GLORY to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will toward men." Thus sang a multitude of the heavenly hosts, at the birth of the Redeemer. Thus sing the happy and benevolent spirits of heaven, in view of the mercy of God to an apostate world. And thus it becomes the ransomed of the Lord, out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, to celebrate redeeming love; to repeat, with joy and gratitude, this angelic doxology, this heavenly anthem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will toward men."

It may not be thought unsuitable, and I hope it will not be unprofitable for us, on this\* holy day, to turn our attention more directly and exclusively, than on ordinary Sabbaths, to the birth of Christ, with the glorious designs and happy effects of his advent and incarnation.

With this view, I have selected the passage of Scripture, placed at the head of this discourse: "Glory to God

<sup>\*</sup> The first Sabbath after Christmas, Dec. 1839. Delivered at Washington, in the Hall of the House of Representatives, and subsequently in other places.

in the highest, and on earth peace; good will toward men." The text, being in the style of ejaculation, has less of connection, than is common between the members of the same sentence. Each member here contains a distinct topic of discourse. To these distinct topics, let me ask your serious attention; while, inverting the order of the text, I speak:

I. Of the good will of God toward men, displayed in the glorious plan of redemption by Jesus Christ;

II. Of the sanctifying and happy influence of Christianity on the character and condition of mankind; or its tendency to produce *peace on earth*; and

III. Of the propriety and duty of uniting in the angelic song; and ascribing Glory to God in the highest, in view of the mystery of the incarnation of the divine Word, with which all this favor of Heaven and happiness on earth are connected.

I. Our first topic of discourse, then, is the good will or mercy of God toward men, displayed in the glorious plan of redemption by Jesus Christ. This is suggested by the last clause of the text. For, although this clause may be understood, as expressive of the benevolent wish, a holy desire of the angels; yet the other construction is most natural; and the language seems clearly to imply a feeling of confidence and joy, in view of the benevolent provision, made for the pardon and salvation of sinners.

Let it not be thought, however, that the humiliation and incarnation of the Eternal Word, or the sufferings and death of Christ, were the exciting cause of the mercy of God! No; this mercy is everlasting, an essential, an unchangeable attribute of Divinity. On the contrary, Divine Mercy both originated and executed the wonderful plan of man's redemption. No sooner had the tempter succeeded, in his attempt to draw

man from allegiance to his Creator and rightful sovereign, and lead him into a state of rebellion, than mercy interposed for his reconciliation, pardon and restoration to favor. No sooner had the apostasy of our first parents introduced sin and misery into the world, than they were encouraged to hope for deliverance from that state, by the gracious promise, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." Often, in succeeding ages, was this promise, under different forms and figures, renewed and confirmed to the fathers, by the prophets; and many, encouraged by it, were led to repentance, restored to obedience, confirmed in faith and hope, and supported even in death. By faith they anticipated the fulfilment of the promise; and are said to have "seen Christ's day" with joy and gladness. They believed in a Saviour to come, died in this faith, and have gone to inherit the promises. So strong was their faith, and so complete their assurance, that they could often say, in the language of one of their number: "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and that, at the latter day, he will stand upon the earth." They, therefore, trusted in the mercy of God; and were reconciled to him, by the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world.

But Divine Mercy not only formed and proclaimed this purpose of salvation, from the beginning; but, at the appointed time, it fulfilled the promise, and carried into execution the whole plan of redemption. He, who had mercifully found a ransom for sinners, "in the fulness of time, sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them, that were under the law," and by their transgressions were subject to its condemning power. What the prophets had seen in vision, and declared in the language of prediction, was exhibited in truth

and reality to the view of men and angels: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;" and believers can now say, not as did the prophets of old, by anticipation, but in declaration of the fact, accomplished: "Unto us a son is born; unto us a child is given; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace!"

The whole scheme of man's redemption in its origin, progress and completion, is indeed expressly ascribed to the mercy of God, as its exciting and efficient cause; to the love of the Father, in sending his Son into the world; to the love of the Son, in divesting himself of his glory, humbling himself to become a man of sorrow and submitting to the agonizing pains of expiation and the ignominious death of the cross; to the love of the Holy Spirit, in striving with man, convincing him of sin, leading him to repentance and new obedience, and thus applying to him the redemption purchased by Christ. "God so loved the world," says an inspired apostle, as "to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish but have everlasting life." Again, he says: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us; because that God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him." It is added by the same apostle: "He loved us, and gave himself for us;" and by another, in equally impressive language: "He, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Thus is it true, that neither the humiliation and incarnation of the Son of God, nor the sufferings and death of Christ, made any change in the divine nature, which is indeed essentially and unchangeably love; but the whole scheme of redemption was itself the effect and highest manifestation of this divine and everlasting love.

But should we, my hearers, view the mercy of God as less important to us; because it is unchangeable, because it is everlasting? Should we consider the plan of redemption through Jesus Christ, as less glorious; because it is the effect of Eternal Mercy, the work of Everlasting Love, the production of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness? Shall we despise the riches of divine grace, because they are so abundant and so freely offered? Shall we reject the benefits of the sacrifice, which Christ has made of himself for us, because it was a sacrifice of disinterested love? Such ingratitude would only aggravate our guilt and increase our condemnation. "How, indeed, can we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!

For it is still true, notwithstanding the goodness and mercy of God, that without this sacrifice we must have perished in our sins. "Without the shedding of blood," we are assured, "there is no remission;" and "neither the blood of bulls nor of goats" could have availed to the taking away of sin, except through their typical relation to the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. Even Infinite Mercy, therefore, could not save one sinner, consistently with the claims of Infinite Justice, till Infinite Wisdom found a ransom. a surety, a mediator. To redeem man from sin and reconcile him to God, a mediator was needed who was able to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and willing to die the just for the unjust: who by virtue of his human nature could suffer, and by virtue of his divine nature could give value and efficacy to

his sufferings; who could make an atonement, commensurate with the sins of the whole world, and thus be "able to save, even to the uttermost, all, that come unto God by him."

Thus a view of the condition of man, as a sinner, alienated from God, and exposed to the righteous penalty of his law and the natural consequences of sin, in connection with a view of the glory and immortal blessedness, which every believer is authorized confidently to expect, through the mediation of Christ, clearly exhibits the riches of divine grace; and confirms our declaration, that the good will of God toward men is displayed in the wonderful plan of man's redemption, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This, however, will more fully appear, when we shall have considered,

II. The sanctifying and happy influence of Christianity on the character and condition of mankind; or its tendency to produce "peace on earth." The phrase, "peace on earth." may denote the reconciliation of men to God, their restoration from a state of rebellion against him, their submission to his will and obedience to his authority; and thus their "peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost." In this sense, the gospel, as it was partially published by the ancient prophets; and more especially, as it was fully declared, after the advent of the Messiah, is indeed calculated to produce "peace on earth;" and this blessed effect it actually does produce in all who cordially believe it; and vield their hearts and submit their wills to its purifying influence. By making them holy, it renders By turning them from sin, it reconciles them happy. them to God. By destroying their enmity against the divine character and government, it leads them to love his law and delight in his service. And by shedding

abroad the love of God in their hearts, it gives them that "peace of God, which passeth understanding."

The phrase, however, may be understood, and probaably is generally understood, to signify social peace, peace among men, harmony between the members of society, and in the great society of nations, with those acts of kindness and benevolence, which naturally flow from a principle of holy love. That Christianity was designed and has a direct tendency to establish this holy principle, and thus to produce this mutual peace among men on earth, must be evident to all, who have studied its character and become acquainted with its spirit.

The benevolent author of this religion is emphatically styled the "Prince of peace;" and in accordance with this prophetic title, he came preaching peace. His example was an example of benevolence. law of kindness was on his tongue. He went about doing good. By his conversation and deportment, he recommended forbearance, meekness and forgiveness. When reviled, he reviled not again. He patiently endured the contradiction of sinners, and the indignities of those who "rejected his easy reign." He taught his disciples to restrain and subdue every feeling of revenge, and avoid all acts of retaliation. His injunctions on this subject, are: "Forgive thy brother, until seventy times seven;" "Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good;" "Love your enemies; and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you." These and similar precepts, he not only recommended by his example, but he enforced them by appeals to sympathy and to conscience; by the highest considerations and the most sublime doctrines. Indeed, the very spirit of Christianity is love; and its genuine effects are always peace and harmony.

You cannot imbibe this spirit of love and meekness, without displaying this character of peace and kind-The principle of gravity in the material world does not more surely cause bodies to approach each other, than the principle of love produces union and harmony in the spiritual world. If you are reconciled to God, through faith in Christ, you will be like him. you will follow his example, you will obey his precepts, you will be kind one to another, you will put away all wrath and clamor and evil-speaking, you will become "tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Cause and effect are not more intimately connected in those changes, which are everywhere and continually taking place in the course of nature, under the superintendence of Providence, than is a cordial belief of the doctrines of Christianity with a practical regard to its precepts. If, therefore, you are truly subject to the Prince of peace, you will seek peace and pursue Can any man, who believes the Scripture record. meditate on the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. there set forth, without finding a corresponding affection spontaneously swelling his bosom? Is it possible for us, to view the character of Christ, and read, with a believing heart, the history of his voluntary humiliation and sufferings, for the redemption of the world, without feeling a portion of the same benevolent spirit, which induced him to leave the bosom of the Father; to empty himself of his glory; and humble himself to be born in a manger, to live a life of poverty and sorrow, to endure the agonies of expiation in the garden, and finally to die the ignominious death of the cross? Can we take a deliberate view of this mysterious love of God to man, without learning to love our brethren, without feeling an interest in the

welfare of those, for whom Christ died, without desiring and striving to promote the welfare of our fellowmen, without becoming kind, meek, and ready to forgive, in imitation of him who was meek and lowly, long-suffering and full of compassion?

I know it will be objected, for the objection has been often made, that facts contradict this reasoning on the tendency of Christianity. It will be said, and perhaps it may be said with truth, that many, who profess to be Christians are among the most unkind and least benevolent of men; displaying a spirit of selfishness and revenge; and continually disturbing the harmony, instead of promoting the peace of society. But, before we suffer this objection to bias our judgments, or exert any influence on our minds, in opposition to the evidence which flows from the plain precepts, the humbling doctrines and the mild spirit of Christianity; we should remember, that profession alone does not constitute a Christian. Many, from some selfish motive, or some worldly policy and sinister design, do indeed profess to be Christians, who have never imbibed the true spirit of Christianity, who neither cordially believe its doctrines, nor practically regard its injunctions, who, in the strong language of inspiration. "have a name to live, while they are dead." But the characters of such professors of religion, furnish no evidence of the real tendency of Christianity, when confidently believed and habitually obeved.

We should remember, too, that even sincere professors of religion and real Christians, while in this state of discipline, and during the process of sanctification, are imperfect, and more or less subject to that "law in the members, which wars against the law of the mind." Although, therefore, they generally act consistently with the spirit of their religion, yet they may sometimes be blinded by prejudice, and overcome by temptation; and hence, through the influence of remaining depravity and unsubdued passion, be found acting, for a season, in direct opposition to the spirit of Christ.

We should remember, likewise, that the slightest imperfections of a real Christian, are like the spots on the sun; they are rendered more conspicuous, and are more readily discovered, by the light which everywhere shines upon "the path of the just," than are the grossest faults and the most aggravated sins of other men, who walk in darkness, and whose characters are, at least, free from the charge of inconsistency. For the very profession of a Christian causes his slightest imperfections to be taken notice of and censured: while the most aggravated offences of those, who sin habitually and make no pretensions to religion, are often disregarded, or soon forgotten. We should remember, moreover, that much of that discord and contention in society, which is ascribed to Christianity; and which Christians are said to have excited, in truth and reality proceeds altogether from a different source; from those lusts and passions, which war in the soul, and which often become more restless under restraint; from the opposition of the enemies of truth and godliness to those who scrupulously regard the requirements, and zealously advocate the cause of the Redeemer. That this would sometimes be the result of the native enmity of the human heart to the humbling truths and reproving precepts of Christianity, and to its faithful advocates, our blessed Saviour himself foretold: when he said, in that apparently paradoxical, but truly expressive language: "I am not come to send peace on the earth, but a sword; for I am come to set the father against the son, and the son against the father; and a man's enemies shall be those of his own household."

We should remember, finally, that, notwithstanding the number of hypocritical professors, who in all ages have brought a reproach on the Christian name, notwithstanding the imperfections of real Christians, which will always be found more or less attached to them in this state of ignorance and temptation, notwithstanding the contentions and persecutions of which Christianity may have been the occasion; we should remember, how much positive good this religion has produced, and how much positive evil it has We should consider, how much it has raised the standard of morals, and thus indirectly influenced the conduct of those even, whose hearts remain still opposed to its spirit. We should compare the state of society in heathen and Christian countries; and recollect how many humane and benevolent institutions have risen up under the fostering hand of the Christian religion; and how exactly the cause of liberty and equal rights has kept pace with its advancement in the world. We should contrast the domestic peace and happiness of a Christian family with the discord and wretchedness of those little clans, who are left to grow up and form their character, without the aid of the Bible, without regard to the Sabbath and its connected institutions. Thus should we learn to answer the objections of infidelity, which are founded on the abuse of the Christian name and the perversion of the Christian precepts. Thus should we learn to vindicate the spirit and character of Christianity; and while we lament its frequent perversions and its limited influence in the world; rejoice, that it has done so much, to soften the ferocity of the depraved

heart, meliorate the condition of the human race, and produce peace on earth.

There is, however, another and similar, yet still more plausible objection to be examined. If, it has been asked, it was the design and is the tendency of Christianity, to produce peace on earth, how comes it to pass, that nations bearing the Christian name, are so often involved in war with each other? Now this inquiry may be answered in few words: It is because national councils have never yet been brought under the complete control and perfect guidance of Christian principles. For if they were thus controlled and guided, wars would cease; and peace universally and forever prevail. If no nation made aggressions upon the rights of others, there certainly could be no just occasion, even for defensive war. And, if a few, or even one nation only, in their public councils, regarded the Christian rule of forbearance, as far as consistent with safety; and of forgiveness, as often and as soon as they should discover in those offending a spirit of repentance, they would seldom if ever find it necessary to contend in arms, even with those nations, which had not yet received the Bible as their directory, nor adopted the great principle of doing unto others, as they would that others should do unto them. But the truth is, that while the great principles of benevolence as well as of justice have been strongly recommended to rulers, by the best writers on the law of nature and nations: practical politicians and men of diplomatic skill, acting as diplomatic agents, have rarely even professed to regard the Christian principles of love, forbearance and forgiveness: and these sublime virtues of the gospel have found no place in the cabinets of princes and the councils of nations. On the contrary, a spirit of exclusive selfishness, under the name

of patriotism; and a spirit of retaliation and revenge, under the name of national honor and glory, have been everywhere cherished, and extensively justified; and to these two anti-Christian principles, may be traced a large portion of those wars, which have deluged the earth in blood.

If it be asked, how it has happened, that the councils of professedly Christian nations have never been governed by Christian principles; we are compelled to give the humiliating answer, that many, who have been called to act in these councils, were not Christians, were not experimentally acquainted with the principles, nor deeply, if at all, imbued with the spirit of Christianity.

Besides, many who claim to be Christians, and in. their private characters are exemplary as Christians, seem to have acted in their official functions, under the mistaken notion, that the same rules of right and wrong, and the same principles of justice and benevolence, which should govern men as individuals, are not applicable to them in their associate and civil ca-They seem to have forgotten, that a nation is a moral person, possessing a common will and a common understanding, with a common and concentrated power of action; and therefore subject to law, under moral obligation, and accountable for its conduct, in its intercourse with the great society of nations. They seem to have forgotten, too, (and this remark, I fear, applies with peculiar force to American Christians,) that Christianity is principally concerned to inculcate duty and enforce obligation; and thus to induce us conscientiously and even scrupulously to regard the claims of justice and benevolence upon ourselves; instead of urging us to expend, as many do, all our

energies in defending our own rights and compelling others to discharge their duties.

To all this, we may subjoin the statement of the fact, that, till very recently, there seems to have prevailed. even in the minds of the best Christians among us, a strange infatuation, upon the subject of national wars, a strange belief, that they were a necessary evil, and therefore to be met with a sort of quiescent spirit. without any effort to prevent them. It is to be hoped, however, that this strange infatuation is fast passing away. A change of sentiment on the subject is evidently taking place, both in this country and in most of the Christian nations of Europe. It begins to be understood, that acquisition of territory by conquest, rarely gives security to government, and never promotes individual happiness; that true national glory can never be separated from national interest, nor national interest from the sum of individual happiness; that the prosperity of one nation is never promoted by the unjust depression, much less by the destruction of another; that nations, like individuals, are rendered happier by aiding each other in the pursuit of happiness, and by assisting one another, in all cases, where it can be done, with safety to both, and without injury to any of the human race. The prevalence of these enlightened principles of international law and policy. with the facts previously stated, in connection with a view of the rapid propagation of the gospel in heathen lands, encourages the expectation, that the time is rapidly approaching, when men will no more feel the need of learning the art of war, and making appeal to arms, to the hazards of chance and the violence of brute force, even for the purposes of self-defence; when, in the figurative, but intelligible and significant

language of prophecy, "men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks;" when every man shall sit quietly "under his own vine and fig-tree, and there shall be none to hurt or make afraid in all the holy mountain of the Lord," when a voice from heaven shall proclaim the final triumphs of the cross, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

But at whatever period, or in whatever manner, this happy change in the state of the world, this complete triumph of truth and love, this blessed consummation of "the good will of God to man, and peace on earth," shall take place: it will surely be accomplished in due time: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. the meantime, we have reason to rejoice, that such progress has been made toward this glorious consummation, that Christianity has extended its influence so far, and done so much to diminish the horrors of war. and mitigate the sufferings of the captive. And. while we rejoice, it becomes us to use the appropriate means, and pray, that this work of spreading the gospel through the earth may be earned forward with increasing rapidity, and that the fulness of the blessing may be speedily and universally enjoyed. Thus are we brought to our last topic of discourse.

III. The propriety and duty of uniting in the angelic song, and ascribing glory to God in the highest, in view of the mystery of the incarnation of the Divine Word, with which all this favor of Heaven and happiness on earth are connected. What I have to say on this topic must, however, be comprised in a few words; and be said with a direct view to a practical application of the whole subject.

Did angels rejoice, my brethren, did angels rejoice at the Redeemer's birth, and shall we, for whose sake he came into the world, remain unmoved in view of this infinite condescension, this mysterious humiliation, this love without a parallel, beyond description, even passing knowledge? Did the heavenly host ascribe glory to God in the highest, while contemplating his good will toward men, displayed in the wonderful plan of redemption by Jesus Christ; and shall we, for whom this work of love was wrought, and to whom this provision of mercy is freely offered, feel no emotions of gratitude, and utter no expressions of praise? Did the inhabitants of heaven, at the birth of Christ, anticipate the blessed effects of Christianity among the inhabitants of this lower world, with benevolent iov and holy sympathy; and shall we, among whom these effects are displayed, and on whom these blessings are bestowed, refuse to participate in their joy, and join in their songs of praise? If we are, indeed the disciples of Christ; if, through faith in him, we have become reconciled to God: if we are not among those, who despise the riches of divine grace, reject the offers of mercy, and "tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant," we shall be constrained by the love of Christ; while meditating on the glorious scenes and bright visions opened to view, in connection with his advent, we shall feel our hearts glow with gratitude for redeeming love; we shall recollect the blessings, which Christianity has already conferred on our apostate race, with joy and thanksgiving; and anticipate those which are promised, and yet held in reserve for the world, with hope and strong desire; we shall rejoice with the multitude of the heavenly host, at the birth of the Redeemer.

and echo back the angelic song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will toward men." ALLELUIAH; AMEN.

# LECTURE XVI.

# CHRISTIAN LIBERTY CONTRASTED WITH SPIRITUAL BONDAGE.

#### JOHN VIII. 34-36.

JESUS ANSWERED THEM, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, WHOSOEVER COM-MITTETH SIN, IS THE SERVANT OF SIN. AND THE SERVANT ABIDETH NOT IN THE HOUSE FOR EVER; BUT THE SON ABIDETH EVER. IF THE SON, THERE-FORE, SHALL MAKE YOU FREE, YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED.

The love of liberty is an essential principle of the human constitution. It is developed with the first operations of the intellectual powers; and it begins to act with the earliest efforts of the will. It grows with the growth of mind; it expands with the expansion of the soul; and it can never be eradicated from the human breast, without tearing away with it, all that is sublime and beautiful in character; all that gives energy, and dignity and happiness to man. We are not surprised, therefore, that He, who "knew what is in man," and how to touch the secret springs of action, often appealed to this powerful instinct of human nature. Our text, with the connected narrative, furnishes a striking example of such an appeal.

We behold here, too, an instance of that happy mode of instruction, often employed by our Saviour, which applies subjects of temporal interest and objects of familiar observation to spiritual purposes and moral improvement. While, at the same time, we discover, from the effect produced on the minds of the Jews, the powerful influence of prejudice; and an exemplification of the natural propensity in the depraved heart and carnal mind, to pervert and misapply the plainest and most interesting instruction.

In allusion to the custom of slavery, our Saviour told the Jews, who were listening to his instructions. that regard to his word, would lead them into that truth, by which they would be made free. But so fully were their minds occupied with the interests of time and sense, and so completely were their hearts riveted to earthly things, that their attention could not be easily diverted from this natural and accustomed course, and directed to spiritual objects and eternal in-Notwithstanding the obviousness of the allusion, the force of the metaphor and the perspicuity of the illustration, they seem not to have understood the intended instruction. So true is it, that spiritual things are spiritually, and only spiritually, discerned. stead of applying the language of our Saviour, as it was obviously intended, to their moral and spiritual condition, they at once refer it to their civil relations and political state; and accordingly answer, with more pride and national vanity than real truth: "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, ye shall be made free?" Had he been disposed to follow them in this perverted train of thought, he might easily have disproved their presumptuous assertion, and confounded their national He might have reminded them of the bondage of the whole nation, in Egypt; of the Babylonian captivity; and of their political subjection, even at that moment, to the Roman government. But instead of stopping to animadvert on their perversion of his language, or to examine and refute their observations, concerning a subject of comparatively little importance, he continued to illustrate the subject, which he had introduced, by the same appropriate and forcible allusion. Instead of pointing them to the Roman towers and the Roman guards, which were probably then in view, and thus reminding them of their temporal and political vassalage, he again brought to their view, the bondage of sin, which rests upon all unrenewed men, and the liberty of righteousness which is graciously offered to all who desire this emancipation, who will believe in him and continue in his word. "Jesus answered them, verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the son abideth ever. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

In this forcible language, Christ represents impenitent sinners, as in a state of complete servitude. illustrate the controlling influence of different passions and appetites, he alludes to the practice of transferring slaves from one family and master to another, and changing their employments according to the respective wills of their different masters. To show, that this description, in some of its modifications, is applicable to all unrenewed men, he intimates, that the Jews, distinguished as they were by their privileges from other nations could claim no distinction here; that, being sinners as well as others, they were in the same state of spiritual bondage; and could derive no advantage in this respect from their parentage, nor be assured of abiding in the house, as children and heirs of faithful Abraham. True spiritual freedom, he adds, can be obtained, either by Jew or Gentile, through him, and through him alone, who is heir of all things;

who came to redeem the world, to destroy the works of the devil, and to deliver from the bondage of sin all that believe on him, and follow him as the Captain of salvation.

Our text, thus viewed in connection, furnishes two distinct, general propositions. The first is, that all impenitent sinners, are slaves; following the corrupt desires of their hearts, in opposition to the dictates of reason and conscience; obeying the commands of passion and appetite, with a spirit of servility; and vielding an unreserved submission to the authority of custom and fashion and blind inclination. The second is, that emancipation from this slavery can be obtained through the mediation of Christ, and through this alone; by faith in him, by imbibing his spirit, following his example and continuing in his word; or in other language, by adopting Christian principles and acting under the influence of Christian motives. These two propositions we might proceed to illustrate separately and apply distinctly. And in such a course we should be justified, not only by the language of our text, but by many analogous passages of Scripture. For the inspired writers often describe the natural state of fallen man, as a state of slavery. Impenitent sinners are expressly denominated servants, "servants of corruption." They are said to be led captive, "captive at the will of Satan;" to be sold, "sold under sin." The same figure is likewise adopted, and correlative terms are employed, to denote the manner of their deliverance from this state of bondage. they are said to be redeemed, purchased, "bought with a price," and brought into glorious liberty. Thus, too, the Agent of their emancipation is denominated their Redeemer; and is said to have given himself a

ransom for them, and redeemed them, at the price of his own precious blood.

But these two propositions may be best illustrated by viewing them in connection; and contrasting the character and condition of the righteous and the wicked; of those who embrace the Saviour, and those who reject his offered mercy.

Before we proceed to take this connected view and make this proposed contrast, however, let it be distinctly stated and carefully remembered, that the liberty of the gospel is a sober, chastened, rational liberty. It observes the relations which we sustain to God and man; and regards the duties which grow out of these relations. It is, therefore, consistent with some degree of restraint; and is limited in its operations by definite rules of action. But this restraint is always voluntary; and these limiting rules accord with the dictates of perfect wisdom, and produce uninterrupted harmony and order. In this, it is distinguished from licentiousness: from that unrestrained indulgence of passion, appetite, and blind propensity, which produces anarchy in the moral system; which leaves one passion to resist another, one appetite to prey upon another and one propensity to counteract another; till the will loses its power, and reason and conscience cease to perform their office.

Let it not be forgotten, likewise, that the character and condition of the righteous vary with the various degrees of holiness, to which they have attained, and with the various spheres of action, in which they move; while an equal variety of character and condition is exhibited by the wicked, according to the various circumstances and temptations of life, to which they are exposed, and the depth of iniquity to which they have sunk. The different objects of desire, which

engage the attention of the carnal mind, exciting different passions, gratifying different appetites and leading to different pursuits, are so many task-masters to the sinful children of men; and they of course produce a corresponding variety of external character and conduct. A view of two or three general varieties, founded on this principle of classification, with the proposed contrast, will, however, be sufficient to illustrate the instruction, contained in our text, and prepare the way for a practical application.

First, then, look at those men who have placed their affections on the things of the world, who are seeking wealth as their supreme good; and contrast their character and condition with the character and condition of those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; who obtain and use whatever portion of this world's goods is allotted them, with a spirit and in a manner consistent with "the chief end of man." Take this comparative view, and see, whether the state of the latter is not freedom indeed, compared with that of the former.

Let it here be premised, however, that the mere acquisition of wealth, or the mere possession of property, does not necessarily imply a love of money; does not prove, that the affections of a man are fixed on things below. Riches may be, and without question often are, acquired in the path of duty, in a course of useful employment; and when acquired, may be, and often are, devoted to purposes of benevolence and felicity. Nor does poverty necessarily imply heavenly mindedness or freedom from a covetous spirit. A man may possess but little, and yet make that little his god. The love of money may be the spring of all his actions; while this object of his affections is forever fleeing from him. He may devote all his atten-

tion and all his energies to the pursuit of wealth, without ever obtaining his end. He may be a miser, though clothed in rags and fed with crumbs.

Let it be observed, likewise, that those, who are made free by Christ are not required to refuse the richest bounties of Providence, nor to reject the highest comforts of life. They are taught, indeed, that "every creature of God is good, if received with thanksgiving." Nor are they forbidden to provide the means of support in sickness and old age; of supplying the wants of those, whom God has placed in a state of dependence on them; and even of distributing bounty and ministering to the necessities of the widow and the fatherless. With a view to these ends, it is indeed the duty of Christians to be industrious and frugal. They are commanded to "be diligent in business." They are required to "gather up the fragments, which remain, that nothing be lost." They are directed to "provide for those of their own household;" and to labor diligently and preserve carefully, that they may be able to "give to him that needeth." Let not industry and economy, therefore, be confounded with avarice. The former are consistent with the most enlarged benevolence and judicious liberality; while the latter closes the hand of charity, and drinks up all the tender sympathies of the soul.

With these preliminary remarks in mind, look, then, at the miser, the devotee of wealth, the man who places his chief good in riches, who devotes to their acquisition all his attention and spends in pursuit of them all his energies. See his anxiety and observe his servility. Whether he possess little or much, he is still anxious for more; he is still the slave of this master-passion in his breast; like the daughters of the greedy horse-leech, he still cries, "give, give." The

love of money is not only "the root of all evil," of every species of crime; but it is an unsatiable desire. It gathers strength by indulgence. It expands itself, as the objects of its gratification fall within its grasp. It is like the devouring grave which never cries, "it is enough." "He that loveth silver," says the wise man. "shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." Till therefore, this vicious thirst of gold in a man is subdued, till the object of his affections is changed, till the love of God comes in and prevails over his love of the world, till the unhappy devotee to wealth is made free by Christ, he is in most complete slavery. pared with him, the galley-slave is a freeman. true, the body of the captive may be chained to the oar; but still his spirit is free; his mind may rove abroad, his affections may be exalted to heaven. But the miser, the covetous man, knows no such freedom. His whole soul is chained down to earth. is imprisoned in iron walls. Not an affection, scarcely a thought, is suffered to rove from his cruel master.

Contrast, now, the condition of this man with the state of him who is actuated by Christian principles and supported by Christian hopes. Is he, by some honest and useful employment, accumulating wealth? He is, indeed, thankful for the blessing; but he is not much elated by it. It is not his chief good; nor does he suffer it to engross his attention, to the neglect of those duties, which his relations to his heavenly Father and his brethren on earth require of him. He is, indeed, diligent in business; but this diligence does not render him a slave. He is free to attend to the calls of humanity, to perform the offices of kindness, which friends and neighbors and society demand. Especially is he free, to discharge the duties and enjoy the felici-

ties of devotion and spiritual communion. Viewing his accumulating wealth as a deposit in his hands for useful purposes, and considering himself as the steward of Him who bestows it upon him, he is not much affected by its increase; nor is he very solicitous to know, how long or how far it will continue to increase; or even how long he shall be permitted to hold it in possession. His chief solicitude is to see, that he does not waste his Lord's goods; and his principal inquiry is how he shall use them, so as to render them most subservient to the purposes of benevolence and felicity, and thus best promote the glory of God. On the other hand, is his property declining? this declension does not proceed from his own fault, if he is neither idle nor extravagant, it cannot essentially diminish his happiness. His happiness was never dependent on his wealth. He knew its continuance was uncertain. He has, therefore, never suffered it to engross his affections, or limit his hopes and desires. It has never been his master; but always his servant. Under the smiles of divine Providence, he received it thankfully; and under the frowns of the same Providence, he resigns it willingly. food and raiment, he is still content.

The real Christian, whether rich or poor in this world's goods, possesses an inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled and unfading. He is, therefore, neither much depressed nor greatly elevated, on account of the uncertain riches of the world. The world can neither give nor take away that better part, which is secured to him by divine promise. Having learned in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content, he is free from that perplexing solicitude, that servile care, that spiritual bondage, which the love of money imposes on the devotees to mammon.

That you may have a farther illustration of our subject, view another class of the servants of sin, and contrast their condition with the condition of those who enjoy that liberty, wherewith Christ maketh his disciples free.

Seconday, therefore, behold the ambitious, the lovers of fame, those who make worldly honor the grand object of their pursuit. Before you take this view, however, it should be remembered, that a due regard for character and a proper deference to the opinions of the wise and good, are not inconsistent with Christian liberty. It implies indeed, an unsocial if not a malevolent disposition, not to desire to please others for their good, and thus to deserve their approbation and favor. It is not only innocent, but commendable, to seek that fame, which will render a person more useful; especially, when it is sought with a direct view to this utility. But this desire is far different from a servile love of praise, from that thirst for fame which makes fashion and public opinion the standard of action, and the applause of man the ultimate object of **pursuit** 

Let it be premised here, likewise, that those who actually obtain honor among men, are not the only slaves of ambition. Here, as well as in the pursuit of wealth, the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Thousands continually seek the bubble reputation; while, in quick succession, it bursts beneath their eager grasp. Nor let it be imagined, that this domineering passion is confined to men of any particular rank or profession. It intrudes itself into all the walks of life, and selects its victims from every grade of society. But wherever it obtains an influence, whether among the high or the low, the

learned or the unlearned, its influence is despotism, and its votary is a slave.

Look at the ambitious man. See with what servility he submits to the tyranny of custom. Behold, how he is dragged along by public opinion and party spirit, against his judgment, against his feelings, and even against the remonstrances of his conscience. He dares not speak, till he knows what others, especially those of his own party, will say. He dares not act, till he knows what others will do. He dares scarcely think, till he has elicited the thoughts of others, and learned what opinions and sentiments will best secure his popularity.

The love of praise, the desire of honor among men, is indeed a peculiarly hard master. It requires the most abject service; and it often requires it without compensation. It subjects those who enlist under its banners, to incessant watchings and fatigue, to disappointment and mortification, to danger and death. It often demands of them the sacrifice of truth and integrity, peace of conscience, health and even life itself.

Take the duellist for an example. Worldly honor, you know, is his object; and for this, he will do—what? For this he will expose his own life, and murder his best friend. Now is not that man a slave, who can be driven to such an act? The African slave, under the cruelest master, is far more free. He indeed is compelled to labor and suffer, but he is not compelled to violate the laws of Heaven and earth; he is not compelled to shed his brother's blood, or rush uncalled and unprepared to the bar of God. This, however, is but a single instance, among a thousand which might be named, of the extreme and abject slavery of those

who love the praise of man more than that honor which cometh from God alone. The principle assumes, indeed, a great variety of forms; and operates in a great variety of ways; but whatever form it assumes, or in whatever way it operates, it is the same tyrannic power, and it subjects its votaries to the same cruel bondage.

How happy, then, are they, who are free from this and every similar oppression! And such, at least in a good degree, are all real Christians. Being made. free by Christ, they are free indeed. It is true, as we have already admitted, that they do not entirely disregard the approbation or disapprobation of men, especially of wise and good men. They take heed, that their good be not evil spoken of, even by bad men. They would not, unnecessarily give offence to They wish to please all men, for their good anv man. to edification. They endeavor to merit the good will. nor do they despise the approbation of the weakest, I had almost said the basest, of the human race. popularity, if human applause, if the praise of man can extend our influence, and thus render us more useful in society, it would be imprudent, it would be wicked, proudly and wantonly to disregard it. But, although the Christian does not disregard reputation, nor willingly throw away a good name; yet, when it is filched from him, he can rise superior to the most oppressive weight of slander; and with serenity of mind rest on the consciousness of his own integrity' and the support of approving Heaven. Nor can he be induced to swerve from the course of truth and uprightness by the flatteries or reproaches of men, of friends or foes. He has higher, purer, stronger motives of action, than those which the praise of man can inspire. He loves not this praise, for its own sake; of course,

he never seeks it as an end. If he can find it in the path of duty, he will not reject it, nor carelessly pass it by; but will seize upon it, and use it, as a means of promoting the cause of truth and righteousness. cannot be found in this path, he will not turn aside in search of it. He can be happy with it, or contented without it. The fame which follows merit he can convert into an instrument of virtuous influence and general utility; but the fame which is sought with selfish views and obtained without merit; which when obtained, fosters pride and becomes an instrument of mischief; which is the tyrant of its possessor, and renders him a tyrant in society, has no charms for The chains of that carnal mind. the real Christian. by which it might have bound him, are broken. He is made free by Christ; and is free indeed.

There is another large class of impenitent sinners, of men destitute of religious principle, who seek for happiness in the indulgence of appetite and the various gratifications of sense; who are devoted supremely to what are called the pleasures of the world. Thirdly, therefore, if you would see our doctrine more fully illustrated, cast your eyes on them; and contrast their condition with that of Christians, of self-denying Christians, who live above the world while they are in it; who use the things of the world, as not abusing them; whose pleasures all lie scattered in the path of duty; and are enjoyed, as these pilgrims proceed on their way to heaven.

Under this head of discourse, however, as under the two former, it is necessary to throw in a caution, in order to guard against misapprehension. Let it be remembered, then, that there are enjoyments, not flowing directly from the offices of religion, not even peculiar to the religious man, which are, nevertheless,

consistent with religious principle and Christian character; which, under the control of holy principle, are sanctified, rendered useful, and sometimes even converted into imperious duties. Such are the pleasures which flow from social intercourse and intellectual improvement, from refined conversation and judicious reading, from the interchange of thought and feeling among friends, from the study of the works of nature and art, from the perusal of books of science and taste; in a word, from all those bodily exercises and intellectual pursuits, which have a general and direct tendency to promote health, invigorate the powers of the mind, or improve the temper and disposition of the heart; and which are calculated, either to qualify or incline us, to do good in our day and generation.

Christianity does not forbid us to partake, temperately, of the bounties of Providence. On the contrary, it spreads before us these bounties, in rich profusion, and says: "Eat, O friend, and drink, O beloved." It does not command us to neglect our bodily health or intellectual improvement. On the contrary, it directly encourages that degree of attention to these objects, which is consistent with the calls of prescribed duty, which may increase our means of doing good, which may enable us more successfully, to "glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are his." It does not require us, to eradicate the sympathies of our nature, to stifle our social feelings, and retire with the hermit to his cave, with the monk to his cell with the nun to her convent. In opposition to this, it directs us to cultivate these feelings, furnishes means for their sanctification, and prescribes rules for their exercise. But it does forbid excess licentiousness, and all vain pursuits. It enjoins moderation and temperance, in all the innocent gratifications of animal appetite and social sympathy; while it expressly prohibits every species and degree of indulgence, which is calculated to injure the health of the body, enfeeble the faculties of the mind, sear the conscience, or harden the heart; which would prove injurious to us, or render us injurious to society. It says to us: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

To those, who admit the truth and feel the force of these general remarks, it may seem almost superfluous to proceed with the illustration; or attempt formally to prove, that he, who under the purifying influence of the gospel has obtained such self-command, as to be able to regulate all his propensities, and observe a due moderation in all his indulgences and pursuits, is free indeed, compared with the man who is devoted to the pursuits of pleasure, who has no control over his animal appetites, who is bound in the chains, which they forge: and forced to submit to the unreasonable and destructive commands which they impose. But, if any doubt the truth of our positions, let them attend to facts. Let them carefully observe the devotees of pleasure, and they will be convinced, that such persons are slaves; they will feel the force of the inspired maxim: "She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth."

It is not because worldly and forbidden pleasures produce positive and lasting enjoyment, that those who are devoted to them, continue in their service. These misnamed pleasures never fulfil what they promise. They often satiate and disgust, and they always leave a sting behind. But they are pursued, because their votaries are slaves. Driven on by their domineering appetites, whose cravings with them are like whips of scorpions, they proceed in the path of

ruin; and often, with their eyes open, and in full view of their danger, rush into the abvss of dissipation and wretchedness. Have you seen the wily serpent charm the thoughtless bird? Have you seen her, under the spell, resigning the power of her wings; and though apparently sensible of her approaching fate, and occasionally agitated with distress, yet continually advancing nearer and nearer to her subtle destroyer, till she quietly sinks into his devouring jaws? Then have vou seen an emblem of the sons and daughters of worldly pleasure. They often see their danger when it is too late to retreat; and are not unfrequently overwhelmed with distress, when there is no space for repentance. Having once yielded to the allurements of the syren, the charm soon takes effect; and they are drawn along, though reluctantly, and sometimes gradually, yet almost surely, to the pit of destruction, like the charmed and self-devoted bird to the serpent's mouth.

Not only those indulgences, which are criminal in themselves and expressly forbidden; but even those pleasures, which are generally esteemed innocent, are often dangerous to virtue and happiness. For, when eagerly sought, they gradually acquire an undue ascendancy in the mind, and finally exert a despotic power over the will and conscience. Indeed, we may lay it down, as a maxim of the first practical importance, that all pleasure, whatever be its native character, or original tendency, when made an ultimate object of pursuit, and sought solely for its own sake, will either disappoint or destroy its votary. It will disappoint his hopes at once; and drive him back to more rational and manly pursuits, wearied, mortified, and ill prepared for them; or it will continue to flatter and deceive, till his destruction is made sure; till he has

become incapable of relishing higher and purer joys; till his energies are exhausted in the vain pursuit, and he is left to sink down in inglorious lassitude and hopeless despair. That pleasure only is real, safe, and worthy of being sought, which falls easily within our reach, which is found scattered along in the path of duty, which grows out of some rational and useful employment, which is adapted to the nature and condition of intellectual and moral beings, living for eternity and forming characters for heaven; which, in a word, we may enjoy without stopping in the Christian course, or turning aside from the narrow way of eternal life.

Thus have I endeavored to illustrate the instruction of our text by an appeal to observation and experi-The illustration might be pursued more extensively and minutely; but the result, in every case, would be the same. We should find, were it possible to make the examination universally and with sufficient minuteness, that every impenitent man is under the influence of some ruling passion or appetite; and is pursuing some temporal object with a spirit of servility; with an exclusiveness which his own sober judgment condemns; with an eagerness which renders him a slave. We should discover, too, that the bonds of iniquity are drawn closer and closer, and the chains of sin more firmly riveted and rendered stronger and stronger, the longer they are worn. We should learn, moreover, that every man, who possesses true independence of mind and freedom of spirit; who is able to regulate his passions and appetites, according to the dictates of a sound judgment and an enlightened conscience, is ready to ascribe this exalted and glorious liberty to the grace of God, the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, the mediation of Christ his Redeemer. We should be persuaded, finally, that the elevation of this liberty, or the perfection of this freedom, bears an exact proportion to the degree of holiness, to which each individual has attained; and produces a correspondent degree of positive enjoyment and permanent felicity. But enough has been said, I hope, to furnish every one with reflections for personal application and improvement; to inspire all with an ardent love of that liberty wherewith Christ maketh his disciples free.

Wherefore forget not, my hearers, that "whosoever committeth sin, is the *servant* of sin." Remember, too, that "if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Be persuaded to become his disciples. Imbibe his spirit, follow his example, and continue in his word. Then shall ye know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

# LECTURE XVII.

## BARNABAS, A GOOD MAN.

#### ACTS XL 29-94.

And they sent forth barnabas, that he should go as far as antioch; who, when he came, and had seen the grace of god, was glad; and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the lord; for he was a good man; and full of the holy ghost and of faith; and much prople was added unto the lord.

To pervert language from its proper meaning, and thus to confound things, which are distinct from each other, is both a misfortune and a crime. It is a misfortune, because it leads to self-deception. It is a crime. because it is calculated to deceive others. An inspired prophet long since pronounced a woe on those who are subject to this perversity of mind, and guilty of this deluding art: "Woe unto them, that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" And yet, how frequently is this done! It seems, indeed, to be a general propensity in depraved man, to confound moral distinctions; a propensity, which many indulge without any apparent restraint, breaking down, as far as their influence extends, the barriers between truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, holiness and sin; confounding that which is good and acceptable in the sight of the Lord, with that which is evil and offensive in his sight. From this propensity, few indeed, if any in this life, are entirely exempt. Occasionally it gains the ascendancy over the good purposes and benevolent feelings even of advanced Christians. Nor can it be completely eradicated from the heart, but with the last bitter root of sin, the last lurking fibre of depravity. How often are the distinguishing characteristics of a "good man," misrepresented and ridiculed by the wicked and profane; and forgotten or confounded with that which is common to sinners and saints, even by those who undertake to describe the Christian character, and to point out the path of holiness and the way to heaven! And how many are thus flattered and deceived: induced to think themselves something when they are nothing, virtuous and good when there is no good thing in them, prepared for heaven when in the sight of God they are impenitent and unholy, living without God, and treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath! Oh! how many are thus drawn into a state of dangerous self-complacency, and sometimes of fatal security and everlasting destruction! How important, therefore, is it, that this self-deception and spiritual delusion should be prevented; and this propensity to confound good and evil counteracted.

Now, to do this effectually, to guard against indulging this propensity in ourselves, and to be able to resist its pernicious influence when exerted by others, we must repair to the Scriptures of truth. To learn what constitutes "a good man," and thus be able to form a proper estimate of our own characters, we must reject all human standards of truth and duty; and look directly to that perfect standard, which the Holy Spirit has established.

What, then, it may be asked, are the characteristics of a good man, according to the Scriptures? To this

inquiry our text furnishes a full and satisfactory answer. And it does this in a manner peculiarly impressive, by exhibiting the example and delineating the character of Barnabas; "who, when he came to Antioch, and had seen the grace of God," in the conversion of many of his fellow-men, "was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord;" for, it is added, "he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith."

In this account of Barnabas, four things, which unite to constitute him "a good man," may be distinctly observed.

L The origin or efficient cause of the Christian character; "he was full of the Holy Ghost."

II. The great principle, which gives activity to all the Christian graces, and produces all the Christian virtues; "he was full of faith."

III. The personal happiness and inward joy which the believer feels in contemplating the glory of God, in connection with the salvation of men; "he was glad when he had seen the grace of God," displayed in the recent conversions at Antioch.

IV. The effect of Christian principle, awakened by Christian experience; the activity and zeal of Christian benevolence, flowing from "joy in the Holy Ghost;" "He exhorted them with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord;" and so, through his instrumentality, "much people was added unto the Lord."

Each of these particulars claims a distinct notice and illustration; and will furnish matter for general application and personal improvement for us all.

I. Let it be remembered, then, that Barnabas, the "good man," according to the testimony of inspiration, "was full of the Holy Ghost." Here, indeed, we find the efficient cause of all goodness in man. Here we

discover the true origin of the Christian character. Here we behold the creative power of the divine life in the human soul. It is a doctrine of the gospel. taught by Christ himself, that "that, which is born of flesh, is flesh; and that, which is born of the Spirit is As a necessary consequence of this truth, we are taught by the same authority, and in language involving the same strong figure, that, "except a man be born again, born of the spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And in accordance with this doctrine of the necessity of regeneration by the agency and influence of the Holy Spirit, we are further taught, that all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus become the sons of God, are "born not of blood. nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Indeed, if we consider the depravity of the human heart, as delineated in the Scriptures; if we view mankind, as they are by nature, and as that nature is displayed in the practice of impenitent sinners, who are destitute of holiness, living without God in the world and without regard to his authority, we shall see the absolute necessity of this divine influence, this powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, to renew and sanctify their souls. We shall hence learn to attribute the origin and progress of holiness, whether in ourselves or others, to the Spirit of the Lord; and with the Psalmist shall ascribe unto God all the glory of our salvation.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that this work of grace in the heart, though a divine work, is nevertheless performed in a manner perfectly consistent with the free agency, complete accountability and voluntary exertions of man. Those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, believe in view of evidence, and without

constraint on their minds. Those who repent and turn unto the Lord, repent of sins, of which their own consciences, enlightened by the Spirit, convict them. Those who submit to God, submit voluntarily and cheerfully; they are willing in the day of Christ's power; and he gives them power to become the sons of God. Those who are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, yield to his kindly influences, and are thus filled with all his fulness, and moulded into his image. But from those who resist the Holy Ghost, he fleeth; leaving them to harden their hearts and perish in their sins. They are condemned, because they resist, because they believe not, because they choose death rather than life, because they love darkness rather than light. They are lost, because they will not obey the voice of the Lord, nor yield to the strivings of the Spirit, nor come unto Christ, that they may have life. Yea, they perish in their sins, not because there is any deficiency in the provision for their pardon, or in the offers of grace for their assistance; but because they reject both; because "they tread under foot the Son of God," and do "despite to the Spirit of grace."

Let it be remembered, too, that the work of the Spirit, in the conversion and the sanctification of sinners, is ordinarily performed by exciting them to the use of the appointed means of grace. Although those who are begotten to a lively hope through Jesus Christ, are born of the Spirit; yet are they, in the language of Scripture said to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God." The salvation of men is ordinarily effected by the preaching of the gospel, under the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit. And this spirit, granted in answer to prayer, excites them to inquiry, leads them to

repentance, and disposes them to receive and obey the truth in love. They are, indeed, sanctified by the Spirit; but it is through the truth. Both of these agencies are necessary to the accomplishment of the work. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit, by which sinners are subdued and brought into subjection to the law of Christ. Without the life-giving influences of the Spirit, the word is "a dead letter," and has no power to save the soul. But, where the truth of the word is applied to the heart and conscience by the effectual operations of the Holy Spirit, it becomes "the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation."

A recollection of this remark, is, indeed, highly important, to guard against self-delusion and fanaticism on the one hand, and an antinomian stupidity and fa-It is necessary to keep us, tal inaction on the other. on the one hand, from the indulgence of wild imaginations and unsanctified passion, and on the other, from sinking into a state of carelessness or despair. It is calculated to lead us carefully to try the spirit, by which we are actuated, whether it be of God: and to examine all our feelings, and compare them with the unerring standard of Christian experience, as exhibited in the records of inspiration. through a forgetfulness of this united agency of the Spirit and the word, in the work of sanctification, deceive themselves, and cherish false hopes or groundless fears; and many by carelessly neglecting or wilfully perverting this great doctrine of the gospel, lead others into error, and leave them in a state of despair or false security. To "the law and to the testimony," therefore, we must repair; and by them try our doctrines and test our experiences. If we speak not according to these, or if our experiences accord not with these, it is because there is no truth and no grace in us. If, now, you try the characters of those who are called "good men," in the loose language of the world, by this standard, how deficient will many of them appear. You hear one thus denominated, because he is free from public crimes and scandalous offences; another, because he is constitutionally phlegmatic and inactive; a third, because he is zealous for the mere forms of religion, or is exemplary in a few branches of external morality; while all perhaps, as their inconsistency of conduct seems to indicate, are actuated solely by selfish motives and worldly policy.

When I see men indifferent to nothing, but the cause of Christ, and the piety and benevolence which he has enjoined, cold and silent on no subject, but religion and the interests of eternity, contending earnestly for anything, but the faith once delivered to the saints; when I behold some ardently engaged in the pursuit of the riches and honors of the world, while they carelessly neglect the great salvation; when I perceive others zealously paying tythes of "mint, anise and cummin," while they habitually omit the "weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith," obstinately attached to names and forms, sects and parties, but indifferent to vital truth and practical piety and virtue; I instinctively ask: are these men "full of the Holy Ghost?" Do they resemble Barnabas? Are they, indeed, and in the true meaning of the phrase, "good men?"

II. We are told, likewise, and this was designated for our next topic of discourse, that "Barnabas was full of faith." In this, we see the source of his spiritual joy and active benevolence; and in this we may behold the principle of all true holiness and all moral goodness, in every real Christian. We may here discover the source of all those gracious affections and

benevolent actions, which compose the Christian character, and constitute "a good man." For faith, in the true import of the term, as used in the Scriptures, implying trust and confidence in Christ, the Saviour of sinners, and a full and implicit belief in the testimony of God concerning his Son—this faith, wherever it exists, always works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world. It furnishes both the rules and motives of Christian action; and, at once, discovers and embraces the hopes of eternal life. We may add, from high authority, "without faith it is impossible to please God."

If now you try the characters of those, whom the world calls good, by this mark, will not the result of the inquiry be, as it was in the former case? Are they "full of faith?" Alas! how many, who are flattered by the application of the epithet good, make no pretensions to faith in Christ! And how many, who call themselves Christians, show by their conduct, that they do not believe in heart; that they have no confidence in the divine promises, and no fear of the denunciations of Heaven!

III. We come in course, to contemplate the religious joy, the holy gladness, with which Barnabas beheld the growing influence of Christianity, the satisfaction and delight, with which he viewed the increasing number of believers, and the rich display of the glory of God, in the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways to the wisdom of the just. When he had come to Antioch, where the gospel had recently been preached with such power, and the Spirit poured out, in such copious effusions, that "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord;" and when he had there seen, for himself, the grace of God, in the reformation of many of his fellow men, we are

told that "he was glad." He rejoiced, that those who were ready to perish had fled from the wrath to come, that souls were flocking unto Jesus as "doves to their windows;" that so many were becoming holy and happy, and bringing a new revenue of glory to his God and Redeemer.

Indeed, such a scene must ever fill the hearts of true believers with holy joy. If there is joy in heaven, when one sinner repents, surely there will be joy in the bosoms of all, who on earth sympathize with the heavenly hosts, when multitudes repent and return to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy. If our blessed Saviour voluntarily endured the cross, for the joy that was set before him, in the prospect of redeeming from the bondage of sin and purifying a peculiar people for eternal life; if seeing, by anticipation, the travail of his soul, he was satisfied; then, surely, all his followers must feel a measure of the same benevolent joy and holy satisfaction, in view of the reformation and salvation of those, for whom Christ died. How, indeed. can any who believe, that sin and misery are inseparably connected, that the impenitent sinner, therefore. must perish; who have themselves felt the joys of pardon and reconciliation to God; who have imbibed a portion of the benevolent spirit of the Redeemer; how can any, thus redeemed, fail to rejoice in the redemption of others. How can they remain unmoved in the midst of scenes so animating, as that which was presented to the view of Barnabas, at Antioch! For the same reasons, that "a good man" will be "grieved, when he beholds transgressors," who violate the law of God, and treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath; he will be "glad," when he sees them turning from the error of their ways and walking in the truth, becoming holy and happy.

If now, in view of this high characteristic of "a good man," we should ask again, how do the so-called good men of the world appear, what would be the answer of truth? Would not the application of this test of goodness show their deficiency, and bring us to the same conclusion concerning them, to which we were brought in the two preceding cases of application? How many are called good, and kind-hearted, by the careless and thoughtless, who are entirely destitute of this trait, which adorned the character of the "good man" described in our text. How many such are there, who rejoice not in the truth and its advancement in the world: but who even rejoice in iniquity. and labor to promote the cause of error; who are never glad, when sinners are "pricked in their hearts," and are crying out for mercy, or with devout gratitude ere singing "hallelujahs" to the God of their salvation. How many are there who ridicule those, who are anxious to know and obey the truth; and who sometimes turn the solemn services of God, and his appointed ordinances, into a farce: and thus do what they can to hinder the work of the Lord, and check the progress of truth and righteousness in the world!

IV. Our last general remark is, that the efforts and labors of Barnabas, to establish the Christians at Antioch in the faith, and persuade others to follow them in the regeneration; his endeavors thus to promote the glory of God, by advancing the righteousness and felicity of his fellow men, furnish another distinguishing characteristic of "a good man." "He exhorted" these new converts, "that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord;" and by his instrumentality, we are told, "much people was added unto the Lord." So anxious was he to make the most of this revival, and so desirous to have the church

well established, and its members thoroughly indoctrinated, that he immediately sought the aid of a more experienced fellow-laborer in the work. It is recorded, in immediate connection with our text: "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people."

Some of these efforts of Barnabas, it is admitted, furnish an example, peculiarly appropriate for ministers of the gospel. But the spirit which prompted them. belongs to the Christian character universally, and must be felt and exercised by every true disciple of Christ. Barnabas did what he could, by his personal influence, and by procuring assistance, for the edification of the church within the proper sphere of that in-Thus, not only all ministers, but all Christians, will do. Thus will all do, who have felt the power of divine grace, and experienced the blessedness of pardon and the joys of salvation, who are "good men," "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." They will not only be "glad," when they hear of the spread of the gospel, and of the reformation of the wicked, under its powerful and sanctifying influence; but they will strive, by all the means in their power, to encourage and promote this blessed work. They will readily and cheerfully unite in every practicable plan of moral and religious improvement. By example, by personal persuasion, by prayer, by imparting and receiving counsel and friendly advice; and by whatever of influence they possess, they will encourage and strengthen the righteous, and endeavor to restrain and reform the wicked, to advance the cause of the Redeemer, and promote the glory of God in the sanctification and salvation of men. It is, indeed, impossible, that any man "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," should remain unconcerned and inactive, while one sinner, within the proper sphere of his influence, continues impenitent and "under condemnation;" or one believer, weak and trembling, exposed to the snares of the tempter and the seducing and corrupting influence of "a world lying in wickedness."

Should we again cast our eyes upon those who claim to be "good men," and whose claim is readily admitted by a flattering world; should we bring them to this test, try them by this standard, and weigh them in this balance; would not many of them be found wanting? How many even among those who bear the Christian name, do nothing to promote the cause of Christ, or the reformation and salvation of those for whom Christ died!

We might proceed, and collect from the Scriptures other marks of "a good man," besides those found in our text, and exhibited in this discourse; or rather we might find these amplified and illustrated in particular precepts and minute descriptions of character. But enough has been said, to furnish matter for personal application and self-examination.

Let us, then, examine ourselves by this Scripture-standard of goodness; and let us not rest satisfied with our conditon, nor hope for a blessed immortality, unless we find in our hearts and lives these marks of "a good man," clearly delineated. Let us not suffer ourselves to be deceived by that propensity of the corrupt heart, which confounds moral distinctions, and calls good evil and evil good. Let us not apply to ourselves those flattering epithets, nor listen to those encomiums of the world, which are calculated to lull us to sleep in our sins, and leave us to perish under the charm of this fatal delusion, this false security. If we

are called good, by those who look merely on the outward appearance, let us not apply the flattering unction to our souls; but let us remember, that God looketh on the heart, and requireth truth and purity in the inward part. If we are called good by those especially, who are in the habit of confounding things and perverting language, putting bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter; calling evil good and good evil; breaking down the barriers between the righteous and the wicked, between the penitent and the unbelieving, between the profane and him that feareth an oath, let us not forget, that their standard is false and deceptive, or rather that they have no fixed standard, either of truth or character. Before we indulge ourselves in self-complacency and peace of conscience, therefore, let us repair to the standard of the Bible, and compare our principles and feelings and conduct, with that only safe and perfect standard for the guidance of human judgment, in things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

Particularly, let us inquire, in the language of our text, are we "full of the Holy Ghost?" Do we possess those gracious affections, love to God and love to man, which are the fruits of the Spirit? Have we thus evidence, that we are born again, by this witnessing of the Spirit with our spirits, that we are the children of God; by this inward testimony of the Spirit of adoption, teaching us, with filial confidence, to cry, "Abba, Father?"

Again, let us ask, are we "full of faith?" Do we so believe in God, as to trust in his mercy, submit to his will, and obey his commands? Do we so believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as to rely on his atonement, imbibe his spirit, follow his example, and keep his words? Do we so believe in the Holy Spirit, as to

feel our dependence on his enlightening and sanctifying influences, and daily look to him for guidance into truth, support under trials, and strength for the discharge of duty? Is our faith of that positive, living, active kind, which works by love, and produces peace and righteousness?

Once more, let us ask, are we glad when we "see the grace of God?" Do we rejoice in the progress of truth and righteousness? Do we sympathize with the heavenly hosts in that joy which they feel, when one sinner repents? When "much people is added to the Lord," by the preaching of the gospel and the conversion of sinners, does it fill our hearts with joy and gladness, more than they experience, who rejoice in the time of harvest?

Finally; following the order of topics discussed, let us ask; are we active, according to our ability and in our appropriate sphere, to promote the glory of God, in the salvation of our fellow-men? Do we throw the whole weight of our example into the scale of virtue? Do we aid, as far as our influence extends, all wise plans of reformation, and all good measures for the propagation of the gospel and the promotion of human happiness? Is it, in a word, our meat and drink to do the will of our Father, who is in heaven?

I cannot close the discourse, without adding the remark, that the present age furnishes a peculiarly favorable opportunity for the trial of our characters, on all these points. Never, since the days of the apostles; never, since the time of the good Barnabas, has "the grace of God," in the conversion of sinners, the enlargement of the church, the extension of the benign influences of Christianity, been more manifest, than within the period of the last fifteen or twenty years. The number and extent of revivals of religion, in our

own country; the united exertions of Christians, in all protestant Christendom, to disseminate the Scriptures and propagate the gospel; the rapid increase and happy success of missionary labors; the great number, both in Christian and heathen countries, who have recently been "added to the church;" the various associations which have lately been formed to check the progress of vice and immorality, to secure the temperance and meliorate the condition of mankind, to communicate divine knowledge, and promote the cause of liberty, peace, righteousness and human felicity; these things conspire to render the present a distinguished era in the history of Christianity and the prospects of the world. If, therefore, you read the religious journals of the day, if you attend to the information which is daily received from the North and the South, from the East and the West; from Europe and Asia and Africa, and the far distant islands of the sea, if you have any correct knowledge of what is taking place in the religious state of the world, you may readily try your feelings, and learn whether you possess the pious aud benevolent spirit of Barnabas.

In view, therefore, of all these facts and circumstances, let us ask again, "Are we glad, when we see the grace of God?" Do we rejoice, when we hear of the triumphs of the cross? Do we behold the various, the united, the powerful, the unexampled exertions, which are made for the spread of the gospel and the conversion of the world, with complacency, with approbation, with joy? Do we, likewise, perform our part in this work of love? By our example, by our conversation by our prayers, by our influence, as far as it extends, do we endeavor to promote the glory of God, in the reformation and salvation of our fellow-men? Or, like many, do we care for none of these things; or,

like others, do we secretly mourn over them; or, as is the case with the bolder class of the enemies of truth and righteousness, do we openly oppose all these benevolent operations, and treat them with pointed ridicule and marked contempt?

These, my hearers, are not vain and merely speculative questions. A faithful answer to them, will furnish to each one of us a distinct view of our real character and spiritual condition. Wherefore, let us judge ourselves; I repeat the exhortation, let us judge ourselves, that we may not be condemned with the unbelieving world! And may God, of his infinite mercy, make us perfect, through faith; fill us with his Spirit, and give us grace to rejoice in him and do his will, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.—Amen.

# LECTURE XVIII.

### CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM.\*

## PSALM CXXXVII. 5, 6.

If I forget thee, o jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cumbing.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS;—The event of Providence, which has given occasion for the designation of this day, to purposes of meditation, public prayer and religious instruction, is one of no ordinary occurrence; and its probable results are of no ordinary interest to the people of these United States. I feel, therefore, that the circumstances, under which we meet, impose on me a responsibility of great weight and uncommon delicacy.

When we visit a family in affliction, recently deprived of its head, and left to mourn the death of a father and a friend; we are not unfrequently embarrassed by the solemnity of the occasion, and the depth of the affliction in those with whom we are called to sympathize. Like the confounded friends of Job, we are often inclined to sit down in silent sympathy, rather than attempt to impart consolation or give instruction. But how much more embarrassing

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was delivered in Northborough, at the request of a committee of that town, on the 14th of May, 1841, in consequence of the death of President Harrison, who died on the 4th of April, one month from the time of his Inauguration.

is our situation to-day, when the head of a nation is suddenly cut down, the chief magistrate of these United States taken away and put into darkness, the father of this great family laid low in the earth, returning "dust to dust and ashes to ashes;" and when we are thus called to sympathize with an afflicted nation, with our brethren and fellow-citizens, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Under such circumstances of embarrassment and responsibility, friends and fellow-citizens, I meet you, to-day, as a portion of this great and much afflicted family. A nation is bereaved; the head of the nation is fallen and the nation is in mourning. It is true, the first paroxysms of grief have passed away; but a settled gloom still hangs upon the public mind; and it is still difficult to give utterance to public feeling, or express sentiments in complete sympathy and accordance with the heart of the nation. The embarrassment, resulting from the magnitude and solemnity of the occasion, and from the multitude of thoughts which crowd upon the mind, still remains, holding it in suspense, and almost forbidding the concentration of its powers upon any definite topic of discourse.

When we visit an afflicted family, as soon as we are able to speak and can obtain a hearing, we find, at our command, two distinct subjects, which in some of their modifications, are always appropriate. We may always, in the language of inspiration, remind those most deeply interested in the afflictive event, that "the Lord hath done it," and that "he doth not willingly afflict and grieve the children of men." We may, accordingly, exhort them, "not to despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint, when they are rebuked by him;" we may encourage them to look to him with confidence for consolation and support; and

urge them to strive, with all diligence and meekness. to learn righteousness, and grow wiser and better, under the chastening and correcting hand of their Heavenly Father. We may dwell upon the inexhaustible theme of the divine goodness; and press upon their consideration, the evidences of wisdom and benevolence. in all the revealed purposes of God, and all the events of divine providence. Or we may, at least sometimes, as often as hope and charity permit, bring before their minds the character and probable condition of their deceased friend; and speak of his virtues and excellences and Christian hopes, not only as a source of consolation, but as a means of grace, as furnishing an example for imitation and motives to holy effort, as calculated to "allure to brighter worlds, and lead the way" to heaven. And, at the first view, it might seem, that the same subjects, cautiously applied, would be appropriate on the present occasion, in addressing a portion of this great national and much afflicted family.

But here a new difficulty presents itself to my mind. This nation is a divided family. Party spirit has thrown among them the apple of discord, and sown in their minds the seeds of strife. Even good men have become, more or less, imbued with this spirit; and, consequently, subject to prejudice in judgment, and even bitterness and alienation of feeling. Of course, all do not view the event, which we are called to notice today, in the same light, nor look upon the character of our deceased chief magistrate with the same degree of approbation; nor do they contemplate his death with the same regret and practical improvement. On this account, restraint is imposed on the public speaker of the day, who would not stir up strife and perpetuate the political divisions of the country. For myself,

I have long since come to the conclusion, that ministers of the gospel of Christ, the "Prince of peace," should not participate in the party-manœuvres and party animosities of the times; nor provoke feelings of alienation among brethren, by entering into those angry discussions on exciting, though generally speculative and abstract questions, which destroy the peace of society and endanger the liberties of the country. If they must contend, let them "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," for the doctrines taught and the duties enjoined in the Scriptures, for the cause of virtue and piety and salvation, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, "the glory of God, and peace and good will among men."

Thus am I forbidden to enter, to-day, on those topics which have divided the sentiments, not only of unprincipled partizans, but even of good citizens; and, in candor, I must add, sometimes of good, though imperfect, Christians. I cannot, therefore, with any propriety, attempt anything like a general eulogy on the life, sentiments, and character of our lamented chief magistrate. Nor can I, in this place, speak of his distinct political views and his proposed measures of administration. But there is one topic, on which I hope I may speak without offence, one trait, strikingly and forcibly exhibited in his character, concerning which all candid and enlightened men agree, whatever they may have thought of his political creed, or political career. I mean his patriotism, his love of country, his honest and zealous devotion to the public service, and what he considered the public good.

Patriotism, then, will be the predominant subject of this Address, a theme clearly and beautifully illustrated in the character of William Henry Harrison, and, I may add, in that of his prototype, George Washington.

This is a theme of great practical importance, not merely to civil rulers, but to every citizen of this Republic; it is a subject never inappropriate in this land of free institutions; but peculiarly important at a time like the present; when this love of country has waxed cold in many, and is in danger of being entirely supplanted by party spirit, and driven from the country, with the subversion of our republican institutions and the entire overthrow of civil liberty and social order.

Give, then, your candid attention to this somewhat trite but important subject; as I attempt, in a plain manner, to place it before you, analyzed, and stripped of false colors and factitious ornaments.

But here again a new difficulty meets me; and compels me to stop, and endeavor to remove an objection, which infidelity and fanaticism have raised against this sublime Christian virtue. It has been said by the enemies of Christianity, and too hastily admitted by some of its friends, that the Bible does not enjoin, nor countenance either "friendship or patriotism," as Christian duties. One writer, at least, of some eminence and unquestioned piety,\* has admitted the validity of the infidel objection, and endeavored to justify the alledged fact, on the assumption, that such injunctions would militate against the great law of love, the general principle of universal benevolence.

It is indeed true, that all private attachments and local partialities, which produce acts of injustice to other persons and other countries; which lead to the neglect of duty to any individual, or any nation on earth; which exclude from our affections and kind offices, those who do not fall within the circle of the attachment; which, in a word, are inconsistent with universal good will, or a disposition to do good

<sup>\*</sup> Soame Jennings.

wherever, whenever, and to whomsoever, we have opportunity for benevolent action; it is true, I say, that all such attachments and partialities are opposed to the true spirit of Christianity. They are, indeed, emanations from that selfishness, effects of that depravity, which it is the very design of the gospel of Christ to counteract and destroy. But where personal attachments and local partialities are so modified and restrained, as to harmonize with general benevolence, they originate and enforce some of the most essential duties of life.

It is true, likewise, that a particular injunction of this class of relative duties is less necessary, than the inculcation of the general principle of benevolence; not only because this principle, once imbibed, will of course lead to the habitual discharge of all relative duties; but because, like the preservation of our own persons, the happiness of our friends, and the prosperity of our country, it generally involves our own private interest. Now, where duty and interest are evidently coincident, it can scarcely be necessary to enjoin the duty. In such cases, it is sufficient that we are directed to attend to the motives of action; to act from a sense of duty; "to do all things," in submission to divine authority, and with a view "to the glory of God." Why are we not expressly commanded, in the Bible, to preserve our own lives? Not because it is not our duty, not because suicide is innocent; but because such a command would be nugatory; because the crime of suicide is against the laws of instinct, as well as of reason and conscience; because, (to use the language of an inspired apostle.) "no man hateth his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it;" and, I may add, because nothing can increase the power of this instinct, nor supply its place, where it has been

torn away from the human breast by the ruthless hand of infidelity or the madness of fanaticism and a perverted imagination. The same reasoning may be applied, with very little abatement, to the duties of friendship and patriotism. So intimately is our own happiness connected with that of our friends, and of the civil community, of which we are members, that we cannot essentially injure the one, without at the same time exposing the other to danger. At least, this is generally the case. Hence you often see those who totally disregard the obligations of religion, and act solely and even professedly from the impulse of emotion and motives of selfishness, performing acts of friendship, and uniting with good men, (though with very different principles and even opposite motives,) in works of public utility and national improvement.

The happiness of an individual, it was said, is generally connected with that of his friends and his country. Viewed on a large scale, in all its bearings, it is indeed always so connected. But it is not always so viewed by depraved and short-sighted men. avaricious man, for instance, may sometimes be so blinded by his ruling passion, as to withhold relief from his nearest relative and best friend; as to act against the dictates of common sense and the promptings of sympathy and natural affection; as to become "worse than an infidel," and refuse to "provide even for his own household." The ambitious and licentious, may likewise see, or think they see, their private interest as disconnected with that of the community; nay, as opposed to it. With these mistaken views, looking for personal emolument and self-aggrandizement, driven on by passion and blind party spirit, they may disregard the principles of the constitution, violate the laws, and undermine the liberties of their country.

The enlightened Christian, however, places a check. and if he is a man of decision and strength of character, an effectual check upon all those passions and prejudices, which lead to the injury of others, and thus secretly war against his own soul. For his inquiry is not so much, what is interest, as what is duty: not so much, what is the road to power, emolument and self-aggrandizement, as what is the path of holiness and the way to heaven; not so much, how he shall secure riches and honor among men, as how he shall do good in his day and generation, and finally obtain that "crown of glory, which fadeth not away." Nor does he find any deficiency in the rules of duty, prescribed in the word of God. The general precepts, the comprehensive commands, "to do good to all men," as opportunity is presented, "to love our neighbor as ourselves," "to do unto others, as we would that they should do unto us," furnish him with a general principle of action, applicable, at all times, and to all cases of social intercourse, in all the relations of life.

But he is not obliged to learn his social duties from these general precepts alone. For it is not true, "that friendship and patriotism" are left without support and encouragement in the sacred Scriptures. On the contrary, many of the duties which grow out of these and the various other relations of life, are expressly recognized and particularly enjoined in the word of God. Does the Christian, for instance, look into his Bible, in order to learn what are his civil duties; he finds instruction, abundant, plain and explicit, both in precept and example; he finds directions to "seek the peace of the city, where he dwells;" to "obey magistrates;" to "submit to the powers that be;" and to do all this, "not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake;" not only through fear of punishment, but from a sense

of duty; with a steady purpose of promoting the happiness of the community, under the influence of a disinterested principle of love. In the apostle Paul, he finds an example of patriotic and ardent prayer for his countrymen, his brethren according to the flesh. hears the prophet Jeremiah uttering the most pathetic lamentations over the ruins of his country; and the sweet Psalmist of Israel singing the sacred and patriotic anthem in our text: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." He sees one greater than Paul or Jeremiah or David, shedding tears of patriotism over the devoted Capital of Judea; he sees the blessed Jesus, in his human nature, weeping at the prospect of those calamities which were coming upon that rebellious, that sinful people, among whom he dwelt. Were it necessary, many other examples of patriotic feeling and action might be adduced from the Scriptures. But time would fail me, in speaking of Moses and Joshua and Gideon, and all the prophets, who voluntarily endured hardships and practised the most disinterested self-denial; who labored, and prayed, and suffered for their country.

Thus we answer the objections of infidelity, and establish the position, that patriotism is not only consistent with a truly benevolent and philanthropic spirit; but is clearly enjoined in the Bible, both by precept and example. Nay more; we affirm, that it is a constituent part, an important branch of that benevolence, that charity, that love, which is the fulfilling of law, the end of the commandment, the very essence and design of the gospel of Christ.

To guard against misapprehension, however, it is necessary to delineate more particularly the character-

istic features of genuine patriotism and distinguish it from those counterfeits, which have too often assumed its name and laid claim to its character and rewards. On no subject, perhaps, is there so much temptation to hypocrisy; and in none, I believe, is it so often practised. How many have made pretensions to this virtue, and for a season exhibited the appearance of patriots, who were all the while ready to sacrifice the welfare of the State to private interest; and have finally proved themselves to be traitors! How many more have talked much of liberty and boasted of their zeal for the public good, who have at length dropped the mask, displayed their true character, and shown, that the liberty which they sought, was the liberty of selfindulgence, the power of oppressing others; that the public good which they desired, was a good to be concentrated altogether in that little object, self. Not every one, therefore, who styles himself a patriot, and lays claim to the rewards of patriotism, possesses this exalted virtue. The mere office-seeker, who is looking solely for the honor and emoluments of office: or the mere sycophant, who is courting favor, at home or in foreign lands, will profess as much patriotism and talk as much of his love of country—as much, did I say? yes more, than the real patriotic Christian, who is sincerely and without display, striving to preserve the liberties and promote the peace and prosperity of his country. But "by their fruits ye shall know them." By their conduct, if carefully observed and thoroughly examined, you may generally discover, who are disinterested patriots, and who are selfish demagogues and servile sycophants. Their public measures, when they are called to public office; and their private characters, while they remain in private

life, are the best, indeed the only faithful expositors of their principles and professions.

I know it is contended, that, in answering the questions, who are true patriots, and who, therefore, are suitable candidates for public office, we have nothing to do with private character. But for myself, I am ready to declare, that I have no confidence in the pretended patriotism of that man, with whatever party he may associate, by whatever political name he may choose to be designated, whatever professions he may make, and however loudly he may boast of his devotion to the public service; who does not maintain a consistent moral and Christian character, who does not habitually regard the authority, and respect the institutions of Heaven. The dishonest, the dissipated, the intemperate and the profane; the gambler, the Sabbath-breaker and the scoffing infidel even, may make pretensions to patriotism; but, in my estimation, they are mere pretensions, unmeaning "as the whistling wind," and unstable as the fleeting meteor. They have their price. They may be bought. are not to be trusted. Like Benedict Arnold, they may wear the livery of patriots; but when private resentments and private interests make the demand, they will, like him, betray their country.

With a view to the proposed analysis and discrimination, we may remark, further, that patriotism is not merely an attachment to the place which gave us birth, cradled our infancy and furnished the sports and pursuits of our childhood and youth. This attachment is indeed natural and innocent. It is consistent with true patriotism. It is even necessarily embraced in the general import of the term. It is an attachment which we should not attempt to diminish; and which we cannot, without great violence, destroy. For

What strange mysterious links enchain the heart To regions, where the morn of life was spent! In foreign lands, tho' happier be the clime— Tho' round our board smile all the friends we love, The face of nature wears a stranger's look.

This attachment to our native country, I say, is natural, is innocent, is proper, and it should be cherished. But it is not that holy affection, that pure sentiment, that enlightened principle, that sublime virtue, which we denominate patriotism. Though not opposed to this benevolent principle, the mere local attachment may, and often does, exist without it. common, indeed, to all who have not, by their vices, destroyed all the sensibilities of their nature, and forgotten all the pleasing and innocent associations of their childhood and youth. It is truly neither virtuous nor vicious; for it is not a moral but a natural feeling. It is the result of simple, arbitrary associa-It exists independent of reason and conscience. and operates irrespective of duty and moral obligation.

The principle of genuine patriotism, I add, is not a mere instinctive sympathy with those, who are born and educated in the same country with ourselves. This, too, is an innocent feeling; but it is not peculiar to the true patriot. On the contrary, it is common to all, who retain the social sympathies, implanted in human nature. Such men never fail of being gratified, and they always manifest a degree of mutual attachment, when they meet in foreign lands. The Shunamite spoke the language of natural sympathy and unperverted social feeling, when, in reply to the prophet's proposal of an advantageous removal, she said: "I dwell among mine own people." Who does not love to dwell among his own people?

Once more, I remark, that patriotism should be

carefully distinguished from that refined selfishness, which extends beyond self, only for the sake of self; which never performs an act, beneficial to others or to the community, without first counting the cost, and estimating its bearing on self-interest and personal emolument; which merely comes up to the low moral standard of the poet, who said: "Self-love and social are the same." For the Christian has an entirely different standard placed before him; and is taught, that those who do good to others merely for the sake of the personal good in reversion, do nothing to distinguish themselves from "publicans and sinners."

There is, if I may be allowed the expression, a national, as well as a personal selfishness. And where this principle, this selfish patriotism exists, it is directly opposed to the principle of benevolence. In its natural operations, it leads to the performance and encouragement of acts of unkindness and injustice towards other nations, whenever such acts seem to involve the welfare of our own country. Like the same principle in its operation towards individuals, it never acts from motives of justice and benevolence: it never does good for the sake of doing good, nor regards right for the sake of the justice of the claim; but merely for the ulterior benefit to self, merely from policy and political expediency. "It is," in the language of another, "an inordinate attachment to the interests of a single community, in opposition to the general good; or, at least, to the exclusion of a proper concern for the more extended welfare of mankind. It is expanded selfishness."

Now this national feeling of partiality, this blind passion, this exclusive principle, has often been confounded with patriotism. And hence, in some truly benevolent minds, a prejudice has been excited against all attempts to recommend a love of country; as if this love implied an unnatural delight, in spreading devastation and slaughter through the rest of the world, a desire of seeing other nations embarrassed, oppressed, destroyed; a wish to enlarge the territories of our own country, and raise our national prosperity and glory, on their ruins. If, indeed, this were a correct view of the nature and tendency of patriotism; if by the term were intended "that mischievous and domineering quality, which renders men ardent in the pursuit of the aggrandizement of their own country by the oppression or conquest of others;" then surely an attempt to inculcate the sentiment and extend the principle, should be discountenanced and even reprobated by every enlightened Christian. patriotism, if any persist in this use of the term, is utterly condemned by that religion, "whose foundation is justice," and whose compendious character is "peace and good will toward men."

But such we contend is altogether a false view of the principle of patriotism, and an unauthorized use of the term. So far is true patriotism from opposing benevolence, that it coöperates with it; nay, as we before observed, is itself a modification of the same principle of love to man, in one of its enlarged operations. For this love, in all its sanctified modifications, be it remembered, is not a blind instinct, but an enlightened principle; not a passive impression, an inactive philanthropy, but a prompting energy, guided by wisdom and restrained by prudence; ever operating where its aid is needed, and where it finds appropriate objects. It embraces patriotism, friendship, and all the sanctified domestic affections. It provides for dependents, seeks the peace of the city and country

where it dwells, and extends the helping hand, and raises the consoling voice to every suffering object within its reach. "Benevolence," (to use the language of Wilberforce,) that benevolence, of which patriotism is a part and parcel, "is always occupied in producing happiness to the utmost of its power, and according to the extent of its sphere, be it larger or more limited. It contracts itself to the smallest. It can expand itself to the amplitude of the largest. It resembles majestic rivers, which are poured from an unfailing and abundant source. Silent and peaceful in their outset, they begin with dispensing beauty and comfort to every cottage by which they pass. In their further progress, they fertilize provinces and enrich kingdoms. length, they pour themselves into the ocean; where changing their name, but not their nature, they visit distant nations and other hemispheres, and spread throughout the world the expansive tide of their beneficence."

I might proceed to point out the marks, by which true patriotism may be distinguished from national pride and vanity, ambition and a love of conquest and glory, prejudice and resentment against other nations. With all these has it been confounded. Yet from all these is it totally distinct; and to most of them it is directly opposed. But, since what might be properly said, on these particular topics, is virtually implied in the remarks just made on the more general subject of national selfishness; I proceed to a distinction more important; because it is one, which the nature and character of our civil institutions renders peculiarly applicable to the people of these United States; I mean the distinction between patriotism and party zeal. These two principles of action, though often confounded and mistaken for each other, are entirely distinct.

The one is a blind passion; the other an enlightened affection. The former is a steady attachment to the public good; the latter an obstinate adherence to names or men or measures. Patriotism, in fine, is a settled principle, which, like a well disciplined army, moves forward calmly and in order, acts, when action is necessary, and contends only with its enemies. Party zeal, on the contrary, is a restless, turbulent passion, resembling in its movements an infuriated mob, advancing and retreating without order or control, dealing death and destruction alike to friends and foes.

It is true party zeal sometimes acts in harmony with patriotism. And since men, destitute of Christian benevolence, cannot be made to act from better motives, the spirit of party is often appealed to; and the liberty of a country is sometimes secured and its prosperity promoted, by the concurrent action of this unholy passion with the pure principle of patriotism. But its uncertainty, instability and irregularity always render it a miserable substitute for the enlightened affection; and when it rises to a certain height and spreads itself to a certain extent in a community, it becomes pernicious beyond calculation; worse even, than stupid insensibility, and a tame submission to absolute despotism.

I have only to add to this delineation, that, while every species of false patriotism is a mere modification of selfishness; true, genuine patriotism is a modification of benevolence, embracing all the inhabitants of our country with the same disinterested affection, which in its wider range, and under the more comprehensive name of benevolence, gathers all nations of the earth, and recognizes them as brethren and members of the same family.

But I forbear. I have dwelt long enough, perhaps too long, on the abstract virtue of patriotism. My apology however is, that the spirit of the times calls for calm discussion and discriminating views, rather than impassioned eloquence and mere indistinct feeling. We have had enough of political excitement; we need sober reflection. The country has been sufficiently agitated, and the public mind sufficiently roused by high emotions, both of joy and of sorrow. We should now endeavor to calm this agitation, soften down these emotions, and direct this excited public mind to sober inquiries after truth and duty.

Friends and Fellow Citizens. I have been led to this protracted discussion, and particular delineation of the features of true patriotism, by the death of a distinguished patriot and devoted friend of our country; and because I thought his death, under all the peculiar and interesting circumstances of its occurrence, should be made the occasion of enforcing upon others this sublime virtue, which he so beautifully illustrated both in his public and private life. Yes, whatever some of you may have thought of his political creed and proposed measures of administration, you will all agree with me in awarding to Harrison the character of patriotism; pure, elevated, unspotted patriotism. his progress in life, follow along his path, from the time of his entering the public service to the hour when he died in that service, overwhelmed with its cares and labors and responsibilities: and you will find abundant and incontrovertible evidence of his love of country, and his ardent devotion to the best interests of his country.

As I said, at the commencement of this discourse, I am not about to repeat this history and trace the events of his life. Were it appropriate, it would be unnecessary. For this history is before the country, in a thousand forms; these events are recorded on the tablet of the public memory; and the image of the character, which they develope, is engraven upon the heart of the nation. Nor am I about to pronounce a eulogy on his private, social and religious character. This, too, is unnecessary. The ten thousand anecdotes of his kindness and compassion, his amiableness and affability, his condescension and meekness, his forethought and prudence, his firmness and perseverance, his energy and decision, his fear of God and love of man, have been told, twice told, in the hearing of every man and every child in the land.

My single remaining object is to apply the subject of this discourse to the occasion; to hold up the virtue of patriotism, as seen in the character of the late President of the United States, as an example worthy of imitation by all; and from the solemnity of the occasion, to enforce the lesson taught, and to encourage the universal cultivation of this sublime virtue. Yes, I repeat it; Harrison was a patriot, a uniform, consistent patriot, a distinguished, an eminent patriot. And in this, he has left an example, worthy of the imitation of all our public men; yes, of every citizen of these United States.

Indeed, the history of our country, may I not add, of the world, scarcely affords a brighter example of genuine patriotism, to which we can point the rising generation. We have had other patriots, whose names adorn the annals of our Republic; but none, I think, superior in true devotion to the public interest, none more consistent, none more lovely. Perhaps you will say, that I ought to make an exception in favor of Washington. And, as to the time, magnitude and variety of public service, I would cheerfully make it; for

no one can have a higher veneration for the character and memory of that great man, the father of our coun-But, with very little abatement I would place William Henry Harrison by the side of George Washington, as devoted, successful friends and servants of that country, which gave them birth, and received in return the benefit of their best services and undivided affection. Indeed, I know of no two public characters, among the distinguished patriots of America or the world, which admit of comparison with each other in so many points of view, which resemble each other in so many particular traits, which were so uniform, so consistent, so nearly without faults, as far as public character is concerned; and which may be, therefore, so safely recommended, as models for the imitation of all succeeding generations.

About a year ago, I visited Mount Vernon, the birthplace of Washington; the place where he lived, when in retirement from public service, and the place where his mortal remains lie entombed. It was to me a consecrated season; and the place seemed like holy ground. I could not cast my eyes upon an object around me, without experiencing a rush of thought and an intensity of feeling, which belong to no other time or place. I could not place my foot on the ground, where Washington often stood; enter the house where he was born and lived; promenade the piazza where he took his morning and evening walks; visit the room where he studied and formed his mighty plans of peace and war; enter the summer-house on the elevated bank of the river, still overshadowed by a venerable oak, where he sat to meditate "at noon or eventide;" view the old family vault, covered with decaying cedars, and surrounded by lofty trees of the forest, where his remains were first deposited; or approach the new tomb, where the Sarcophagus, the depository of his once noble but now mouldering frame, is seen through the grates; I could not stand or move amidst this scene, without associations, too rapid for record, too mighty for utterance; without thoughts not to be clothed in words, and emotions, only to be felt, never to be described, unutterable, overwhelmning. I took time for meditation. I retired from the company, and seated myself on the grass, beneath a widespreading oak, and in view of both the tombs; and there called up the images of the past, the reminiscences of Washington's life and time, as far as memory could reach; and I gave to imagination full power to mould and combine them, and give them a "local habitation." It was enough.

I cannot forbear to give you a short extract from the imperfect record of my reflections at the time.

What a man was Washington! In war and in peace, how great! How uniformly great! Nowhere. at no period, in no country, in no age of the world, if you search the earth around, and trace the records of time, can you find a parallel character. There may have been men, who exhibited more of the lofty bearings of the soul, more of the moral sublime even. There may have been men, too, who exercised a larger measure of Christian benevolence, in some of its modifications, and displayed more of what may be denominated moral beauty. But like the spot which gave Washington birth, a place of residence and a grave, his character embraces both the sublime and the beautiful, the great and the good; more, indeed, of grandeur, mingled with the softening shades of beauty; more of dignity and majesty, blended with kindness and forbearance; more of self-respect and self-government, in connection with disinterested benevolence and lofty patriotism; more of elevation with uniformity and consistency of deportment; more amenity, symmetry and completeness of military, civil and social character, than is found combined in that of any other man, of any age or country.

Such were some of my reflections at the tomb of Washington; and similar, but less vivid, have been my thoughts and feelings, suggested by the death of Harrison. I say less vivid; for we need the presence of sensible objects and visible scenes, to give vividness and reality to associated conceptions and moral reflections.

I cannot hope to stand on the North Bend of the Ohio, as I have been permitted to stand on the west bank of the Potomac, and indulge reflections on the character of Harrison, in the same circumstances which placed Washington before my mind, among the groves of Mount Vernon. But should any of you, fellow-citizens, visit the West, and sail down the Ohio. will you not pause a little while, and view the scenes associated with Harrison's life, and indulge in the meditations and feelings, which a recollection of his public services and distinguished patriotism, associated with the beautiful scenery of nature before you, is calculated to inspire? Such meditations cannot fail to make you wiser and better. Such meditations all our public men need, to prepare them for the service of their country. Such meditations, indeed, would be beneficial to every citizen of these United States, that he may learn the true characteristics of genuine patriotism, and feel the importance of elevating to public office none but patriots; none but men like Washington and Harrison; none but those who maintain a consistent character of devotion to the welfare of the country.

Washington and Harrison; where are they? They are gone; and we must soon follow them to the judgment. Let the living example of their patriotism call forth our admiration and gratitude, and provoke And let the solemn voice of death our imitation. awaken our solicitude, prompt us to action, and urge us to do quickly, what we have to do for our country and our God. Let rulers and citizens, old and young, live, while they live, not to themselves alone, but for others as well as themselves; to discharge faithfully all the duties, growing out of all the relations of life. Let them live prepared for protracted life or sudden death. Let them listen to the warning voice which proceeds from Harrison's tomb. And, like him on his dving bed, let them meditate on the highly significant language of prophecy:

"Watchman! what of the night?
Watchman! what of the night?
The watchman said:
The morning cometh, and also the night.
If ye will inquire, inquire ye;
Return; come!"\*

<sup>\*</sup> These, or a part of these, are said to be the last words which he distinctly uttered.

## LECTURE XIX.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN CITIZEN.\*

## 1 TIMOTHY IL 1, 2.

I EXHORT, THEREFORE, THAT FIRST OF ALL, SUPPLICATIONS, PRAYERS, INTER-CESSIONS AND GIVING OF THANKS BE MADE FOR ALL MEN; FOR KINGS AND FOR ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY, THAT WE MAY LEAD A QUIET AND PEACEABLE LIFE, IN ALL GODLINESS AND HONESTY.

Among the duties enjoined in the Scriptures, none is more prominent and imperative, than that of prayer; and among the doctrines of revelation none is more clearly and explicitly taught, than that of the efficacy of prayer. The duty is inculcated in "precept upon precept," illustrated and enforced by example after example, and encouraged by "exceeding great and precious promises." And thus is the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer taught and established by the authority of the Moral Govenor of the universe.

There seems, indeed, to be an established connection between prayer and the blessings of Heaven. They are represented, as bearing to each other, in the moral government of God, the permanent relation of cause and effect. The relation may not appear to us so obvious, as the same relation in the natural world; because our spiritual vision is exceedingly limited and

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was delivered in Dudley, on the day of the Annual Fast, April 4, 1844.

obscure. But it is no less certain in the one case, than in the other. For in both, it is established by the same supreme authority; and maintained by the same unchangeable counsels and almighty energy. The connection itself, we cannot see in either case; but of the fact, that a permanent relation exists in both, we may be assured. This fact in the one case we learn by experience, and observation on the course of nature; and in the other, by experience and the testimony of divine revelation.

We plant and sow, and cultivate the earth, and as a natural and general consequence, we obtain the fruit of our labor in the time of harvest. The seasons revolve, the vernal suns shine, and the gentle rains descend; and, as a natural consequence, vegetation revives, and the earth brings forth herbs for the sustenance of man and beast. These facts we learn by experience and observation; and hence we discover the relation of cause and effect; and relying on this uniformity in the course of nature, we are encouraged to use the appropriate means in order to obtain the desired end; to plant and sow, that we may reap and enjoy the fruits of the earth.

With equal certainty we learn from revelation, that God governs in the moral and spiritual world, by equally general laws; and has connected the bestowment of blessings with the prayer of faith; and we are thus encouraged, as moral, dependent and accountable beings, to use this means, in order to obtain his favor and the blessings we need. And just so, though in a more limited degree, because our faith is weak and our prayers few and feeble; just so, we learn by experience the efficacy of prayer; and are thus encouraged to pray, with the hope, with the expectation, with the assurance, of obtaining "pardon

and grace," blessings temporal and spiritual. Yes, just in proportion to the strength of our faith, and the spirituality and fervency of our prayers, we find the divine promise fulfilled: "Ask and ye shall receive;" and the divine testimony illustrated: "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Why God governs, in the natural world, by general laws, and by just such general laws as he does, we may not, indeed, be able to learn. For "we cannot by searching find out God; neither can we find out the Almighty to perfection." Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, too high for our discovery, too deep for our research, too extensive for our comprehension. Nor is it necessary, that we should know "the secret counsels" of God, and comprehend "his deep designs;" that we should understand, why he made all things, as he did, and sustains and governs them, as It is enough for us to be acquainted with he does. the facts. For this is practical knowledge, the only practical knowledge belonging to the subject; the only knowledge, necessary to furnish us with appropriate means for obtaining desired ends, and to encourage and prompt us to use these means, with becoming diligence and energy.

So, likewise, we are in a great measure ignorant of the reasons and principles of the divine government, in the moral and spiritual world. Why God has connected regeneration and sanctification with a knowledge of his word and the belief of the truth, as it is there revealed; why he has made happiness and misery dependent on character, or men in any measure dependent on one another, in the formation of character; why he has connected the bestowment of his blessings with prayer; we may never be able fully to comprehend. Nor, as in the other case, is it at all

necessary for us to know. A knowledge of the fact of the connection, and of the duty involved, is enough And, however infidels may cavil at the doctrine, and careless sinners neglect the duty of prayer; the penitent sinner, the humble believer, will be satisfied with the authority which establishes the fact of its efficacy, and cheerfully obey the command which enjoins upon him the duty of prayer. will account it not only his duty, but his privilege, to pray. He will take delight in drawing near to God by prayer, supplication, thanksgiving and praise. will pray for himself, and make intercession for others, He will pray for blessings, temporal and spiritual; and in all things and under all circumstances, will let his requests be made known to God. He will, therefore, feel and regard the exhortation of our text; where an inspired apostle says: "I exhort first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority." And this he will do, from day to day, with a humble and believing heart; with confidence in God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: with a sincere desire for the continued peace and prosperity of his country and the happiness of all mankind.

It is my intention to confine my remarks in this discourse, to the particular clause of the text, in which Christians are exhorted to "pray for all that are in authority;" that is, as I understand the phrase, for all the civil rulers of their country; for all the constituted authorities in the land, in which they live; whatever may be the form of the existing government, the character of the administration, or the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed.

The subject before us, then, is the duty of praying for our civil rulers; for all in authority among us,

whether that authority is derived from the constitution and laws of these United States, or from those of this Commonwealth. And this, my brethren, is a subject peculiarly appropriate to the occasion; to the public services of a day set apart for "fasting, humiliation and prayer," by the Governor and Council of the Commonwealth, agreeably to the established usage of our pious ancestors.

In treating of the subject before us, I shall pursue the following plan of discourse:

I. I shall endeavor to explain and limit the subject.

II. I shall suggest such motives, and present such considerations, as seem calculated to enforce the duty involved.

III. I shall speak of some of the collateral duties of Christians under a republican government; such, especially, as must be discharged, in order to render our conduct consistent with sincere prayer for civil rulers; and thus constitute the distinguishing characteristics of a "Christian citizen."

First, then, I am to explain and limit the duty of praying for our civil rulers, as it is enjoined in the text. And here, let it be observed, that we are required, in this connection, to pray for them, merely as rulers; merely in their official capacity, and with reference to their official relations and duties. This is, indeed. clearly implied in the marked distinction, made in the text between rulers and "all men;" but more clearly in the closing passage of the text, which indicates the particular object of praying for rulers, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty;" that they may so rule, as to produce peace and prosperity, as to afford public security and protect personal liberty, as to be "a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well." This is the end and

design of every good civil government; and with a view to this end, all our prayers for our civil rulers Their lives, their health, and even should be offered. their spiritual condition and eternal salvation, are of no more importance, than those of other men, except so far as the public service and the welfare of the community are involved. It is true, that in the first part of our text, as well as in other portions of Scripture, we are directed to pray for "all men," for the temporal and spiritual good of all men; and rulers are evidently embraced, with other men, in this direction. They are, therefore, like other men, objects of benevolent affection; and should, with other men, be made the subjects of pious supplication. But, when we pray for them, as rulers, under their official titles, we should limit our views to their official relations, and the duties and acts, connected with their public functions.

This is a limitation of great importance; and especially, in times of party division and political excitement, when wicked men are seeking occasion to blaspheme; and when even good men are more or less under the influence of prejudice, and the feelings which result from limited and mistaken views of pub-And if this limitation had always been regarded in our places of public worship; if public prayers for rulers had always been confined to their official functions and relations, the consequences would have been most happy. Then, unholy feelings would not so often have been excited in seasons of devotion: and never, as has frequently been the case, in the bosom of piety itself. Nor would the practice of stated, public prayer for those in authority, sanctioned as it is by the example of our pious forefathers, have fallen

into general disuse, through fear of giving offence and exciting these unholy feelings in the house of God.

Let it be remembered, then, that when we pray for our civil rulers, we should, as far as possible, confine our views and our supplications to their official characters and public functions; forgetting, if we can, their private characters and political views, we should pray for them as rulers. We should, indeed, pray that our rulers may be wise and good men, "fearing God and hating covetousness;" that they may be guided by wise counsels, and led to adopt and pursue wholesome measures. We may ever subjoin the petition, that whatever may be the character of their measures and their counsels, they may all be overruled for the public good, and rendered subservient to the peace and prosperity of the community. We should pray for our legislators, that they may enact wise and good laws; such only as the public welfare demands; for our judges, that they may judge righteously, forming their decisions according to the laws and constitutions of their country, in the fear of God; for those who occupy the seat of chief magistrate, both in our general and state governments, as well as for all subordinate, executive officers, that they may carry into execution the enactments of our legislatures and the decisions of our courts, with fidelity and impartiality; for all "our officers," indeed, that they may "be peace;" and all "our exactors," that they may "be righteousness;" or, to sum up the whole duty, with its object and design, in the words of our text, for "all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

Secondly, I proceed, as was proposed, to suggest such motives, and present such considerations, as seem

calculated to enforce the duty before us. With this view, I remark, that the exhortation in the text is equivalent to a divine command of general application. For, although it was originally and directly addressed to Timothy and the Christian congregations, to which he ministered in word and doctrine, it involves a general principle, extending the duty to all Christians, in all countries and all ages of the church.

As men are social beings, and as civil government is necessary to the existence of social order and personal security, this duty of praying for civil rulers must be binding on all Christians, while they remain on earth, under whatever form of government they are placed. While they continue to be members of civil society here below, it will be their duty, "to seek the peace of the city where they dwell;" and to pray for all the constituted authorities of their country. exhortation, inculcating the duty, therefore, is neither temporary nor local in its authority or application; but it is equally applicable and authoritative in all ages and in all countries. Yes, my hearers, it applies to us; and it applies to us with as much force, as it did to Timothy and the Christians at Ephesus in the apos-Nor does the fact, that the duty is inculcated in the language of exhortation, in the least degree, diminish the force of the obligation. For, as before observed, the exhortation, having been given by an inspired apostle, is equivalent to a divine command. The command of God, then, is upon us; and we are thus urged by the highest motives, which can be presented to a believing and obedient spirit, to pray for our civil rulers: to make "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks for all that are in authority" among us. Indeed; this consideration alone might seem sufficient to enforce the duty. Nor can

any one, who feels the full force of a divine command, and is truly submissive to divine authority, live in the entire neglect of the duty. If you are Christians, you must pray; for prayer is the very breath of spiritual life. And, if you truly pray in the spirit, and according to the direction of the word of God; you will sometimes, at the hour of prayer, remember your country, and the institutions and civil rulers of your country.

But still we are so prone to grow negligent and remiss in duty; the piety, even of the most devout among us, so often becomes languid, and their prayers so "faint and few," that we all need to be stirred up by every moving consideration, to the faithful and regular discharge, even of acknowledged duty. Our piety needs the aid of our social affections, of our sympathies and benevolent feelings, of our patriotism and domestic attachments, to render our prayers and intercessions fervent and persevering. I add, therefore, that Christians are urged to the faithful discharge of the duty of praying for their civil rulers, by motives of patriotism and benevolence. If we love our country, this love will prompt us to pray for our civil rulers, that their measures of administration may be so taken and carried out, as to secure the peace and promote the prosperity of the whole community. And, if we possess a benevolent spirit and wish for the diffusion of peace and happiness through the world, we shall be prompted by this philanthropic spirit, to pray for those who administer the government of our country; that they may act toward other nations with justice and reciprocal kindness; that they may be wisely directed in their counsels, and disposed and enabled to maintain the relations of peace and friendly intercourse with all the nations of the earth.

That we may feel the importance of this duty, we should remember, how much the peace and order and prosperity of the community depend on wise and wholesome laws, faithfully and impartially administered; and how much mischief and misery a single unequal and injudicious enactment may produce. Such, for example, as laws giving license for keeping and using implements of gaming, houses of licentiousness, and places for traffic in intoxicating liquors; which, wherever they exist, offer direct encouragement to vice: establish a most odious monopoly: and authorize a few members of the community to inflict incalculable evils on the rest of society, causing more than half the expense of maintaining courts and jails and public retreats for the poor and the insane.

Nor should we forget, how much the industry and virtue and happiness of our country at large, depend on the wise administration of our general government; possessing, as it does, power to regulate the currency and commerce of the whole country, and of the several States of the Union, in their intercourse with each other; as well as to prescribe rules for the regulation of foreign commerce, and to enter into treaties with other nations, by which our relations with them are maintained, and all intercourse with them regulated. We should remember how much suffering and wretchedness may be brought upon the country by a single rash act of Congress, or by a single injudicious measure or even careless mistake, in any branch of the government; such, for instance, as should extend and perpetuate an existing evil, or produce civil discord and endanger the union of the States, or involve the country in unnecessary foreign war.

We should, too, consider the temptations and diffi-

culties, to which rulers are exposed, in consequence of the blinding and perverting influence of party-spirit, the excitement of an electioneering campaign, sectional and local interests, the falsehoods and misrepresentations of a mercenary and licentious press, and even the prejudices of a limited or wrong education. in view of these difficulties, in connection with their solemn responsibilities, and the tremendous consequences which may follow an error in their judgment, or even a careless mistake in their measures, we should feel for them, as well as for our country and for ourselves; and pray for them with perfect sincerity and great earnestness, that they may be preserved amidst these difficulties and temptations; and kept from these dangerous errors and fatal mistakes; that they may be restrained by divine grace and guided by heavenly wisdom; that all their public counsels and public measures may be directed or overruled, so as to be made subservient to the public welfare, so that peace may dwell in our land and prosperity in our habitations, so "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

We should cherish these recollections, and often meditate on these things; and thus call into exercise our patriotism and benevolence, if we have any; and even our private affections, domestic attachments and self-love itself, as far as we innocently may, to quicken our languid piety, and induce us to pray much and with fervency of spirit, for all "that are in authority" among us.

Here I should proceed, as was proposed, to speak of those duties which may be considered as collateral to that of prayer for rulers. But this branch of our subject is so comprehensive and so important, that I must defer the consideration of it for the present. Besides, a voice from the Capital of our country and the tomb in that Capital, arrests our attention, and furnishes new considerations for fasting and prayer; and in a special manner urges upon us the duty of prayer for our rulers and our country.\* The melancholy event of Providence, which has recently occurred near the seat of our national government, in all the connected circumstances, should surely be viewed as a solemn and awful rebuke; a rebuke for wickedness in high places, and for the practical infidelity of the nation. It shows us, if anything can give us a serious view of truth, that it is in vain to put our trust in man, "whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose life is a fleeting shadow." It reminds us of what we have often been reminded, during the last three or four years, by the multiplied deaths of public men; and especially by the death of our last chief magistrate, soon after his elevation to office, it reminds us of that which the Scriptures and experience teach. But we are slow to believe and prone to forget, that civil rulers, though clothed with power, must nevertheless die like other men. And, if I mistake not its voice, it sternly rebukes that war-spirit, which has recently in the Capitol itself, boasted so loudly of its prowess, and proclaimed so vehemently its thirst for blood; and that

\* Allusion is here made to the catastrophe and destruction of human life, on board of the steam-ship Princeton, commanded by Capt. Stockton. The following account of this event is extracted from a newspaper of the 2d of March, 1844.

<sup>&</sup>quot;TERRIBLE DISASTER AT WASHINGTON. We received yesterday, the intelligence of one of the most distressing occurrences that we have ever been called upon to record. During an entertainment on board the United States steamer Princeton, on Wednesday last, at which the President, the heads of department, and many other distinguished guests were present, the large gun in the bow of the boat, burst at the moment of its discharge, spreading destruction among those who were standing around it. Mr. Upshur, the Secretary of State; Mr. Gilmer, the Secretary of the Navy; Commodore Kennon of the Navy; Mr. V. Maxcy and Col. Gardner of New York, with a colored boy named Henry, were immediately killed; and several others were severely wounded."

party-spirit which has there, and everywhere through the land, raged with so much violence and such recklessness of consequences; as well as that levity, vain pageantry and empty boastings, which for several years past have marked the public movements of this nation.

I would by no means confine this remark, in its application, to any particular party in power, or out of It is applicable, I fear, to all parties, in their hours of success and triumph; at least, to the irreligious portion of every party, as it comes into power. Many, I fear a majority of this great nation, in their bustle and show, in mirth and revelry, have forgotten the God of their fathers, and sunk into practical infidelity. A few, I know, have mourned over these follies, this wickedness in high places and everywhere through the land; and have carried the cause of their suffering and bleeding country, before their God, into their closets, and even into their public sanctuaries of But is it not time, that all who claim to be devotion. Christians, of whatever denomination, or of whatever political party, should unite in these devotions; should look unto God for the salvation of their country: should go from their closets to the ballot-box; should introduce their rulers into office with fasting and prayer, rather than by thoughtless merriment and profane hilarity; should consecrate them to the service of their country in the fear of God, by prayer and supplication: should follow them with prayer in all their counsels and labors, and under all their temptations and responsibilities? In view of the prevalence of vice and iniquity, folly and sin, profaneness and irreligion, in the land; and especially in view of the recent solemn judgments and awful rebukes of Divine Providence, should not this whole nation be covered with

sackcloth, and all the people humble themselves before God with fasting and prayer? O that men were wise, that they understood these things, that they would consider and repent! O, my countrymen, while the hand of God is upon you, repent and turn! To-day let us all repent and turn unto God, the God of our fathers, who ruleth among the nations, and "doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord; and give not thy heritage to reproach!"

## SECOND PART.

Thirdly, I proceed, as was proposed, to speak of some of those duties, which are implied in the exhortation of the text; duties, which devolve upon us as Christian citizens, living in a republican government, and under constitutions securing as much personal liberty, as is consistent with public safety; those duties especially, which must be discharged, in order to render our conduct consistent with sincere prayer for our civil rulers.

The considerations proposed for this head of discourse are not unimportant or unappropriate. It should never be forgotten, and yet men are prone to forget, that prayer, in order to be acceptable and availing, must proceed from a heart right with God, and be followed by a life of obedience to his will. You cannot sincerely pray for any blessing for yourselves or for others, without a corresponding desire; nor can such a desire exist without producing a course of conduct, corresponding with the desire itself. All other

prayer is formal, hypocritical, vain. You are directed to pray for your enemies; but how can you truly comply with that direction, while you cherish toward them a spirit of hatred and revenge, and are contriving measures of retaliation? You may, in a cold and formal manner, pray for the spiritual good and eternal salvation of your children and neighbors; but where is the evidence of your sincerity, if you do nothing to secure these blessings; especially, if your example and conversation are calculated to lead them into error and sin? Such prayers must be "empty sound," unmeaning and vain words, if not solemn mockery and absolute hypocrisy.

So likewise, all your prayers for civil rulers, must be vain, or worse than vain, while you neglect those duties, which constitute the characteristics of a good citizen; which are, indeed, necessary to secure the end which you professedly desire, and for which you formally pray. Our text, as we said before, strongly implies this, by subjoining to the exhortation the significant phrase, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." If, then, you neglect those duties, which have a direct bearing on the peace and prosperity of your country, your pretended prayers for your civil rulers are vain; there is no sincerity, no heart, no efficacy in them. No; in order to pray aright, you must feel as well as pray, and act as well as feel; you must, especially, discharge with fidelity, those duties which constitute the characteristics of a Christian citizen; a good citizen of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, and of the United States of America.

1. Such, I remark, is the duty of using whatever of influence we possess, to promote to civil office wise and good men, and none but the wise and

good; at least, none but those whom we esteem men of sound principles and correct judgment, qualified to fill their respective offices, with faithfulness and ability. This is not only a Christian duty; but one which we cannot neglect, and at the same time sincerely pray for those who are promoted to office. For the very neglect of this duty, implies a carelessness and indifference to the public welfare, inconsistent with sincere, humble and ardent prayer for those on whom this welfare so much depends.

I do not say, that it is the duty of every legal voter always to cast his vote for civil officers. This, unquestionably, is generally a duty; because, in ordinary circumstances, this is one of the most direct modes of using legitimate influence. But privilege, be it remembered, does not always and necessarily involve Rights do not always impose obligations on those who possess them. Some rights may be alienated: and the exercise of others, in peculiar circumstances, may be voluntarily suspended without alienation from duty. And the elective franchise, it seems to me, is one of this class. As a citizen, as a legal voter, you possess the right, and may exercise the privilege, of casting your vote. But when it is evident. that the exercise of it cannot secure the election of good men to office; when it would oblige you to trifle, or to sanction iniquity; especially, when without any present benefit, it would diminish your influence in ultimately promoting the public good, you may sus-Indeed, I hesitate not to say, you ought, in this case, to withhold your hand, till you find opportunity to put it forth to some good purpose. the duty of every Christian citizen, of every Christian person, I add, whether a voter or not, whether old or young, whether male or female, to use whatever of influence he or she may possess, to promote to civil office, wise and good men; at least, such as are deemed well qualified for the public service; and to use this influence everywhere and by all proper means, according to the decisions of a sound and deliberate judgment.

I add, by way of caution, that I would not advocate the adoption of any particular test for office, either ecclesiastical, political, professional, moral, or even religious. I am glad that our constitutions prescribe no I rejoice especially, that in our country, ecsuch test. clesiastical and civil authority are kept perfectly distinct; that Church and State, in this land of liberty, are entirely divorced from each other. And, I hope, the divorce will become universal and perpetual: that ecclesiastical establishments will soon everywhere crumble into dust, and be scattered by the four winds of heaven. The church needs not, and it cannot without injury, receive the support of civil power. The ark of God, though it may sometimes tremble and seem ready to fall, needs not, nor will it admit with impunity, the hand of Uzzah, to hold it up. Wherever the attempt has been made, it has always, as in Perez-Uzza, proved vain or fatal. Wherever union between church and State has been formed, the one has been corrupted, or the other has sunk into tyranny; and thus civil liberty and religious truth have perished together. No; let no religious test for office be But let every man, free from the tramprescribed. mels of bigotry and the prejudices of sect and party, exercise his best judgment, in selecting for civil office, the faithful of the land, and none but those whom he accounts faithful: and let him use his best endeavors to promote their election, and secure their services for his country. Thus only can you sincerely, consistently and effectually comply with the exhortation of our text; and truly and fervently "pray for all that are in authority."

2. Another Christian duty, growing out of our relation to civil society, essentially connected with sincerity in praying for rulers, is obedience and submission to civil authority. Indeed, this duty is very explicitly, and in very strong language, enjoined in the sacred Scrip-"Submit yourselves," said the apostle Peter, "to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to a king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers and the praise of them that do well." "Let every soul," said the apostle Paul to Christians at Rome, "be subject to the higher powers. For the powers that be, are ordained of God. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." The same apostle, likewise, directs Titus, as pastor and teacher of the church in Crete, to "put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers to obey magistrates, to be ready for every good work." And all this implicit obedience and unreserved submission to civil authority is enjoined on Christians, not as a matter of prudence and mere expediency, but as a subject of duty and high obligation. For it is added, in the epistle to the Romans: "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake:" not merely through fear of the penalty of violated law: but from a sense of duty and regard to the will of God.

By some, it has been maintained, that we are not bound to obey laws, which we account unwise and injudicious; that we may innocently violate or evade such laws; provided we are willing to risk the danger of detection, and when detected, patiently suffer the pen-

alty. Such, I remember, was the doctrine of some. with reference to the restrictions on commerce during the existence of the embargo, which preceded our last war with England. Such seems to be the practical doctrine of all, who attempt to evade our excise-laws, post-office laws, and all laws enacted for the purposes of revenue and the protection and encouragement of domestic industry. And such, in application to the action of States with reference to the government of these United States is the modern doctrine of nulli-Such, however, is not the doctrine of the Scriptures; and such it seems to me, is not the doctrine of reason and common sense; since it would, if carried out, nullify all human law and undermine all civil authority. No; the duty of obedience to civil authority is not a matter of expediency merely, but of obligation, moral and religious obligation. It is subject to no exception, but that of inconsistency with higher duties, under the express command and absolute authority of Heaven. And here the exception is made, illustrated and recorded for our instruction by the pen of inspiration; settled, indeed, by the same authority, that has prescribed the general rule and enjoined the dutv.

Thus, when Saul in his madness, "said unto the footmen, that stood about him, 'turn and slay the priests of the Lord, because their hand also is with David,' the servants of the king would not put forth their hand, to fall upon the priests of the Lord." Thus, too, when Nebuchadnezzar had issued a decree, requiring all his subjects to fall down and worship the image which he had set up, enforcing the command by a most appalling penalty, there were found among his Jewish subjects, those who felt themselves bound by higher authority to resist the decree at all hazards;

and they said: "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Thus, moreover, when the rulers at Jerusalem commanded the apostles, "not to speak any more, nor teach in the name of Jesus; Peter and John answered and said unto them. Whether it be right in the sight of God. to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak that which we have seen and heard. We ought to obey God, rather than man." And thus are we taught, that whenever a civil law, or a command of a magistrate, requires us to disregard higher authority and violate the laws of God; the civil obligation is cancelled; and we are bound to resist the assumed authority, even unto death; always replying to those, who make the demand, in the spirit, if not in the words of the persecuted apostles: "we ought to obey God rather than man."

These cases of resistance to civil authority illustrate the principle, on which the exception to the Scripture rule of obedience is founded. Nor is there any other exception to the general law, sanctioned by the same authority; unless you should say, that this does not include the right of revolution; the right of withdrawing from abused power; the right of resisting perverted authority; and changing the whole structure of civil government, whenever it has ceased to answer the purpose of its institution, and by reason of a complete perversion, has become "a terror to good works and a praise to them that do evil." Since all just civil authority originates from the mass of the community, and is delegated for the public good, the right of revolution, as a last resort, and in extreme cases of the abuse of power, unquestionably exists. But, while civil government continues to exercise its proper functions, and

to answer, in a good degree, the end for which it was instituted; while civil rulers are sustained in authority by public sentiment and public feeling, whatever may be their defects of character, and however unwise some of their measures may appear to you, the duty of obedience and submission to civil authority continues; and presses its claims on the conscience of all who are capable of feeling moral obligation and religious motives.

Our present object in discussing this subject, however, is to show its connection with sincere and acceptable prayer for civil rulers; and for this purpose enough has been said. Remember, therefore, if you would comply with the exhortation of the text, and pray for all that are in authority, with sincerity and fervency, you must "submit to the powers that be;" and you must do it, not only "for wrath, but for conscience sake."

3. Another duty, without the discharge of which we are unprepared to offer sincere and effectual prayer for civil rulers, is that of maintaining due respect for men in office, and viewing their official character and conduct with candor; speaking of them with truth and simplicity and kindness even; representing their persons and conduct in the light of truth and nature, without prejudice or partiality, or the least perversion of facts or distortion of character. "Thou shalt not speak evil of the rulers of thy people," is a direction of as high authority and extensive application, as that which enjoins the duty of prayer for civil rulers. And a faithful regard to the former constitutes an essential preparation for the due observance of the latter.

This duty of Christian courtesy toward civil rulers; and, I may add, toward all who, by age, or office, or character, are entitled to respect, is peculiarly impor-

tant, and it presses its claims on Christians and patriots with peculiar force, in this age and country; because the virulence and recklessness of party spirit seem to be sweeping away all tokens of respect for character and office, and even all marks of decency and good manners, in social intercourse. Men occupying places of honor and responsibility are, in our time, often misrepresented and treated with indignity by political opponents; and, must I not add, by unprincipled demagogues of all parties. Strictures are made on the measures and motives of public men. without the least apparent regard to the claims of charity and forbearance, or even of truth and justice. The tongue, the press and even the accomplished arts of design, such as painting and engraving, are prostituted to purposes of party misrepresentation and slan-And, unless this hitherto growing evil can be arrested by the interposition of Christian influence, the consequences, it seems to me, must prove disastrous to the country, must destroy the peace and order of society, and shake the very foundations of our free institutions. I tremble in anticipation of the probable result; and I exhort every Christian man and woman to come to the rescue. Let no Christian admit into his family such party-political journals as are filled with false statements and false reasonings; misrepresenting, as they often do, both the conduct and motives of public men; and conducted, as they always are, without candor or regard to the peace and prosperity of the country.\* Nor let him suffer his children to view those debasing pictures and engravings, by which men in public life are caricatured, and their public acts misrepresented. If you would save the

<sup>#</sup> If you need a newspaper, find one that "speaks the truth in love."

rising generation from political licentiousness, and the country from ruin; if you would faithfully discharge the duty, enjoined in our text; especially, if you would pray for our rulers, with the spirit and temper, which are essential to the acceptableness and efficacy of prayer; you must not only yourselves, abstain from the practice of speaking "evil of dignities;" but you must not countenance and encourage the practice in others; you must not, in this respect, be partakers of other men's sins; you must put far from you the instruments and vehicles of falsehood and slander and party strife; you must resolve to "touch not, taste not," handle not" the impure and contaminating thing.

4. Another duty, which in these days devolves on every enlightened Christian citizen of these United States; and which cannot be neglected, without disqualifying you for the prayer enjoined in the text, is an attempt by all suitable means, to diffuse general information and sound Christian principle through the whole community. The remark cannot be too often made, nor the consideration too strongly fixed in every American mind, and too deeply impressed upon every American heart, that free institutions, or a truly republican government, cannot be maintained without knowledge and virtue, and these extensively diffused throughout the republic; without a system of education, which brings this knowledge to every man's door, and pours it into the mind of every child who is growing up, to become a man and a citizen; and, at the same time, without such a dissemination of religious truth and virtuous sentiment or at least of the means of moral education and religious instruction, as will bring the light of Christianity within the view of all portions of the country and of all classes of the community, and allow them and enable them to examine

for themselves, believe for themselves, and act for themselves in the fear of the Lord. If either of these ingredients in the great conservative principle of liberty is essentially wanting, liberty itself cannot exist. You may proclaim men free, and raise over their heads the banner of liberty; and even write out for them, on enduring parchment, the strongest declaration of rights and the best guarded constitutions; but you cannot, without the light of education and the principles of virtue, make and keep them free. Without these preservatives of liberty, they will be slaves; they will hug their chains; or in their wild struggles for freedom, they will wind themselves up in new cords, and suffer themselves to be "bound with green withes;" or they will rush into the arms of despotism, and tamely crouch beneath the voke of tvranny.

All history confirms this strong statement. Look at the French revolution, its origin, progress and result; look at the struggles and revolutions of the South American States, and their present condition and future prospects; look at the nations and States of Europe, where there are the best forms of constitutional government, without general education; or where, on the other hand, there are the best systems of education, as in Prussia and Saxony, without Christian liberty and the means of establishing Christian and moral principle on the basis of free inquiry; look, and you cannot fail to see a full proof and a clear illustration of our statement.

Do you, then, wish and hope to preserve the free institutions, bequeathed to you by your fathers; and hand them down unimpaired to your children; you must do what you can to furnish the means for their preservation and perpetuation. You must coöperate

in all judicious efforts to support and extend that system of education, which would carry instruction to every child in the country, and to every family of emmigrants, as they enter our borders, and plant themselves on our mountains or in our vallies. You must. too, place before them "the Bible, without note or comment:" Christianity in its purity and simplicity: religious instruction, without party spirit, bigotry or Especially must you strive to extend these salutary influences in our new settlements; so as to meet the mass of uneducated unsanctified mind. which is annually and rapidly flowing into our country from all the dark places of the earth, "full of wickedness and cruelty." You must educate your sons and daughters to be free, and to become in turn the parents of freemen; you must so educate them, that they may be able to educate others; and that, as they move Southward and Westward, and spread themselves through the country, they may carry with them the New England system of schools, and New England habits and sentiments and character. Without this effort, or something like this, strenuously and perseveringly made, our free institutions must fall; the Union must be dissolved and broken into fragments, or melted into a solid and lifeless mass; the country must be deluged in the blood of civil war, ravaged by armies, and, like all preceding republics, swallowed up in the whirlpool of revolution, and sunk in the abyss of despotism. I shudder at the image of ruin and wretchedness, which my own imagination paints, in anticipation of such a catastrophe; and I dare not indulge it longer in its flight, or attempt to delineate its terrific creations. I dare not place myself on the "Mason and Dixon line," and look to the South and to the North, and view the tremendous operations of disunion and civil war; the mingled blood of brethren slain by the hand of brethren; the awful catastrophe, which must be the result, if they are not soon checked, of increasing ignorance and bigotry, infidelity and fanaticism; which must be the result, unless the strong influences of education and religion can be brought to bear on the great mass of yet uneducated and unsanctified mind.

I dare not, in imagination, ascend the heights of the Alleghanies and look over into the valley beyond, and across to the Rocky Mountains; and view the multitudes who are taking possession of that vast region, and becoming citizens of the United States; while they are generally uneducated and often under the control and direction of a foreign despot; I dare not contemplate this mass of ignorance and bigotry, as it rolls along, mingling itself with the error and fanaticism and infidelity which are meeting it from portions of our own country; I dare not anticipate the probable result of the mingling of these elements of anarchy and despotism.

I love to look on brighter prospects; I would rather anticipate a more happy, and I hope a more probable result, from the influence of the great conservative principle of knowledge and virtue, the influence of education and the gospel sent forth to enlighten and purify the mingled and heterogeneous mass of mind beyond the mountains. I love to look on the Schools and Sabbaths and Christian Institutions of New England; and follow them with my eye and mark their blessed influence, as that influence spreads itself abroad in the land, scattering light in the midst of darkness, and bringing order out of confusion. I love to take this view, because it is the only view, connected with the hopes of the country and of the human race; the only

view, with which the God of our fathers permits us to hope for his favor and pray in faith for his blessing.

With this cheering view before the mind, I conclude as I began, by exhorting all, who believe in the efficacy of prayer, and regard the authority of the inspired word, to make "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, for all that are in authority" among us. Be persuaded, my brethren, to enter on the discharge of this and the connected duties, with new zeal and fidelity. Let the solemn considerations, which have been placed before your minds to-day, move you and hold you to this duty. Let your prayers for your country and the rulers of your country be offered with sincerity; and in view of the judgments of God, by which this whole people have been recently rebuked for their sins, let it be done with deep humiliation and fasting. As sinners, offer your prayers with penitent hearts and contrite spirits; as citizens of a country yet free, offer them with feelings of gratitude and patriotism, and offer them in faith and with a spirit of obedience, as disciples of Him who hath set us an example of self-sacrifice and obedience, and has commanded us to render unto all their dues: "to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And while the prayers of all the good people of this Commonwealth are ascending in concert to-day, may God, of his infinite mercy, grant them answers of peace, and save our beloved country. - AMEN.

### LECTURE XX.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATED YOUNG MEN.\*

# LUKE XIX. 13. OCCUPY TILL I COME.

Among the moral axioms recognized in the Scriptures, and sanctioned by the authority of Inspiration, a prominent one is, that responsibleness is coëxtensive with ability. "It is required of a man, according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not." Of him who possesses little, little only will be required; but of him who has much, will much be required. To the man who has ten talents, and to him who has one only; to the man whose intellectual powers have been highly cultivated, and who enjoys means for accomplishing much good in the world; and to him who is limited both in capacity and in his sphere of action, the same direction is given by the Lord of all: "Occupy till I come."

The parable, of which this direction is a part, was unquestionably designed to illustrate and enforce the sentiment of the text, that every man is bound diligently and faithfully to employ whatever powers and

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was prepared, (in connection with a Baccalaureate Address, not printed,) and delivered at Middlebury, Vt., before the members of Middlebury College and others, on the Sabbath preceding an Annual Commencement.

means of usefulness he possesses; to do good as he has opportunity and ability. For my present purpose, therefore, I need not attempt to furnish a particular exposition of the whole parable. Nor is it my intention to dwell long on the comprehensive injunction of our text, viewed as an abstract principle. But I shall take such a limited view of it, as seems most appropriate to the occasion; and endeavor to draw from it such instructions as appear best adapted to youth; to young men in particular; more especially, to young men who enjoy the advantages of a liberal education. And this I shall do, with reference to the peculiar characteristics of the age and country in which we live.

I. Notwithstanding the limits which I have prescribed to myself, I may still remark, in few words, that the obligation involved in the moral of the parable, and expressed in the detached passage selected for our text; the obligation to employ our time, consecrate our substance, and use all the means in our power for the promotion of human happiness, is an obligation of universal application, pressing with equal force upon all. The requisition, "Occupy till I come," reaches every rank and condition of life. rich. the learned and the noble, are not above His authority, nor are the poor, the ignorant, and the obscure, beneath His notice, from whom it proceeds. "No man liveth to himself." Such are the mutual relations existing among men, that the happiness of thousands is often greatly increased or diminished by the slightest movement of the obscurest individual.

"No man liveth to himself;" and no man has a right to attempt thus to live. The duty of benevolence grows out of the relation of mutual dependence; and the obligation is as extensive as the relation itself.

and the ability to meet is claims. Selfishness precludes that love which is "the fulfilling of the law," that charity which is the end of the commandment." For "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" "charity seeketh not her own." "Am I my brother's keeper?" is the language of exclusive selfishness. It was the language of the first murderer; of the first man against whom "a brother's blood cried from the ground." "Am I my brother's keeper?" is still the inquiry of selfishness: and the answer of benevolence is still the same: "Yes, Cain, thou art thy brother's keeper, thou art bound to love thy brother, and seek his good." Yes, an inspired apostle has decided, that every one "who loveth not his brother;" who is regardless of the happiness of his brother; who forgets, that by the relation which he sustains, and therefore by the appointment of Heaven, he is indeed his brother's keeper: that every one who thus "hateth his brother, is a murderer," has already committed the crime in his heart.

"No man liveth to himself." We are not our own. We are the property of him, who created and redeemed us; and we are bound by the cords of love, bonds stronger than death, to glorify him with our bodies and spirits, which are his. Whether we are able to do little or much for his glory, to promote the cause of truth and righteousness and salvation, to increase the sum of human happiness, that hitle or that much we are bound to do; and we shall do it, if we love him, and possess his spirit of kindness and benevo-Whether we have ten talents or one only, what we do possess we should put to use; and its use should be such, as to render it subservient to the end, for which it was given. All the powers and faculties of our minds, as far as we have opportunity, we should cultivate and employ, in the investigation and defence

of truth, in the practice of virtue, and in the promotion of happiness. All the health and strength given us, as far as our agency is available, we should preserve and employ, as occasions calls, for purposes of utility and benevolence. The wealth bestowed upon us, or acquired by the blessing of Heaven on our labor and industry, we should consider as "lent, not given;" intrusted to us as stewards of the Lord, and to be employed by us, according to his will, in doing good.

"No man liveth to himself." As selfishness is sin; so indolence is sin also; or rather it is one of the worst forms of selfishness. Not to employ our talents is to abuse them. Not to do what we ought, is no less a dereliction from the path of duty, than doing what we ought not. The condemnation of the unfaithful servant proceeded not from the charge of having wasted his Lord's goods; but from that of having concealed his talent, and suffered it to lie useless. A state of unprofitableness, therefore, we are authorized to consider as a state of guilt and condemnation.

II. I proceed to consider the peculiar claims of the direction before us, to the immediate attention and practical regard of the young. Youth has been well denominated the seed time of life. In youth character is generally formed for time and for eternity. At least, the foundation of character is then laid, on which the superstructure, whenever and however raised, must rest for support; and the beauty and excellency of the latter will depend, in no small degree, on the proportion and strength of the former. Youth is the season of keen sensibility and quick discernment, of vivid association and deep and lasting impression. It is, therefore, the proper season for disciplining the mind and purifying the heart; for establishing principles and forming habits; for cultivating, directing and

applying to the purposes of usefulness and benevolence, whatever of talents each individual possesses, and is required to "occupy," till called to his last account.

Those who are advanced in life, generally pursue, to the end, the course which they had shaped in their youth. Their habits are so established, as seldom to admit of change. Generally, indeed, after a certain period, these habits become as firmly established "as the everlasting hills," as unchangeable as the skin of the Ethiopean or the spots of the leopard. Therefore. although the obligation to be useful is never cancelled, while life and the active powers of life last; yet in the aged, if the principle of good has not already been established in them, and the work of benevolence already begun by them, there can be but little hope of producing reformation, and but little expectation of being able to enforce upon them a practical regard to the requisition before us. Our exhortations to active benevolence can scarcely be expected to reach their hearts; so as to change the whole cast of their inclinations and the whole current of their lives; so as to bring them back to the service of God, and render them useful and happy in doing good.

But concerning the young, whose sympathies have not yet been exhausted on imaginary evils and ideal sufferings, nor choked by selfish passions and vain pursuits, there are better hopes. While the relations in life are comparatively few and simple, it is comparatively easy to commence a course of life, in conformity with their requirements. This, therefore, is the time to establish those principles, cherish those sentiments, and form those habits, which alone can produce a useful and happy life, secure the end for which we should live, qualify us for the enjoyment and com-

munication of that felicity which flows from the fountain of holiness, which is inexhaustible and eternal. But, when the relations of life are multiplied by new domestic connections, by enlarged social intercourse, and by civil, professional and political engagements, by the pursuits of wealth or ambition, by absorbing cares or flattering honors or intoxicating pleasures, there is little time or inclination left, to settle principles and lay the foundation for character. The season is past. The opportunity is lost. The case is well-nigh hopeless.

But undeniably true and highly important as these positions are, with reference to all who are yet in their youth, they possess peculiar force, in application to young men. The other sex are more excluded from the world, and less exposed to the temptations and corrupting influence of public business and political intrigue, of everything, indeed, which has a tendency to benumb the sensibilities and exhaust the sympathies of the soul: to sear the conscience and harden the heart; to produce that moral lethargy, which an inspired apostle describes as a state "past feeling." When, therefore, we bring the message of our Lord, "Occupy till I come," we deliver it with peculiar hope to the young; and with peculiar solicitude, mingled with hope, to young men. To them we say, not only. "Occupy till your Master comes," but begin to "occupy" without delay. Opportunity lost cannot be recalled. Now is the accepted time.

III. I proceed, as was proposed, to apply the exhortation in the text more directly to those young men in particular, who enjoy the *privileges of a liberal education*; or who by public education or private reading and study, have obtained extensive knowledge, and a thorough discipline of their mental powers.

Such, surely, have a deep interest in the subject. For among the means of usefulness in the world, which qualify a man for extended influence, none are more available than mental endowments, native genius cultivated, intellect disciplined and enlarged, knowledge incorporated with the soul, and by the process of assimilation rendered a constituent part of the mind. This limited application of the exhortation, therefore, is peculiarly interesting and important; not because men, thus educated, are placed under obligations to virtue, stronger than those which rest upon others. For, as we observed before, all in this respect stand on equal ground, and are equally bound, to use whatever of talents they possess, for purposes of utility and benevolence. But, as the effects of their movements will be greater, and the consequences of their actions more extensive, on account of their elevated education, it becomes a question of deeper interest to them and to the world, what course they shall pursue; whether they shall pervert and abuse their multiplied talents, or continue to cultivate them, and to consecrate them to the service of their country, their fellowmen and their God.

Knowledge is power. Education is influence. In proportion, therefore, to the enlargement of men's knowledge, and the elevation of their education, will ordinarily be the extent of their power and influence. Of course, in the same proportion as their power and influence are enlarged, the question becomes more and more interesting and important, whether they will be exerted to promote the cause of virtue and human happiness, or to disseminate the principles of licentiousness and impiety, and thus entail misery on mankind; whether they are to animate and move a Tully or a Catiline, a Wilberforce or a Byron, a How-

ard or a Buonaparte; whether, in their continued development and progress, they are to bless or curse the world; whether they are to resemble the benignant and salutary influences of the sun, which, as he moves on, in his gentle yet rapid course, gives life and light to all beneath his genial rays; or be like the blighting influence of some baleful star, some erratic comet, which, as it proceeds in its unmeasured course, excites in the ignorant and superstitious terror and dismay, "portending death in every palace and every cottage, o'er which it sweeps, and shaking from its horrid hair pestilence and war."

This view of the subject imposes on young men, of liberal education and cultivated minds, the duty of progressive improvement, of continuing their literary pursuits and scientific investigations, after they have completed their prescribed course of study, and have left the academic halls. The principal object of a liberal education is often greatly misapprehended. not so much to finish the business of study and acquisition, and make learned men, at once; as to teach the art of learning, to show the pupil what to study, and how to study, that he may become learned. and be able to render his learning, as fast as he obtains it, subservient to the purposes of life. It is not so much, to acquire a stock of knowledge during the season of pupilage, to be laid up in the memory, and exhibited for self-gratification and vulgar astonishment; as it is, to incorporate what is acquired with the mind itself, and cause it, like the nutriment of a vegetable, to assimilate itself to the mind, which it thus nourishes, and expands, and invigorates. cipline and train the intellectual powers, so that we may readily acquire, firmly hold, and easily communicate knowledge. It is, if I may adopt a simile, taken

from the pursuits of mechanical life, it is to acquire the use of our tools, rather than to accumulate materials, and lay them by, for future use; it is to obtain the mechanical skill, while we are left to procure the necessary materials and purchase the stock to be employed, as occasion calls for their use. It is, as it has been well expressed, to gain "a philosophic spirit and the art of philosophical," rather than to accumulate a mass of philosophical facts, or to become contented with a few assumed and abstract philosophical principles.

A liberal education, therefore, so far from authorizing a young man to be indolent and negligent in his studies, as soon as he has finished the prescribed academic course, really imposes on him new obligations, and holds out before him stronger inducements, to continued application and persevering research. His education is a talent, and it must not be hidden. But as it furnishes him with facilities for improvement and means of usefulness, it calls for effort and demands corresponding results.

This view of the subject, I may add, will aid educated young men in choosing a profession, in fixing on the kind of employment and the course of life which they ought to pursue. A judicious decision of this question is of the utmost importance; and yet the decision is often hastily and carelessly made, under the influence of narrow views and mere selfish considerations; or the question is left undecided, till the energies of the mind are wasted on indefinite purposes and ill-directed efforts. The simple and only practical question, on this subject, is a question of utility and adaptation. You have only to ask, "Where shall I be most useful; or, for what are my talents best adapted?"

I know, you may persuade yourself, that your own happiness should be the prominent and ultimate object of pursuit; and this anticipated happiness you may place in the acquisition of wealth, in the attainment of honor and distinction, or in whatever seems calculated to gratify your ruling passion. But I know, too, (for the Scriptures so teach, and experience and observation confirm and illustrate the truth,) that such a course of reasoning and such a method of deciding the question, will often lead to fatal error, and not unfrequently end in disappointment and wretchedness. The simple and only question of practical importance on this subject, to be decided by a young man, who has finished his preparatory studies for professional pursuits, is, as I said, a question of utility and Nor will this, in the ultimate results, difadaptation. fer essentially from the inquiry after happiness; when this inquiry is conducted upon liberal principles, and under the direction of comprehensive and enlightened For usefulness, properly understood, is duty; and duty, faithfully performed, is happiness. "The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

The young man, then, who has passed through a liberal and well conducted course of education; and who wishes correctly, and in view of the high relations which he sustains, and the solemn responsibilities which rest upon him, to determine what course he ought to pursue in life, may decide, and if he would answer the great end of his being, and prepare for his high destination, he must decide upon this broad principle of utility and adaptation. To ascertain the will of God and learn his duty, he must consider what are the wants of society, the claims of humanity, the calls of benevolence, and his own peculiar qualifications

for particular pursuits; what is his ability and what the adaptedness of his talents, to supply one rather than another of these wants, to meet one rather than another of these claims, to answer one rather than another of these calls. He must ask, what needs to be devised by the mind enlightened by literature, and how far he is able and called by the voice of Providence, to devise it; and what needs to be done by the hand nerved and directed by science, and how far he is qualified and called to do it? And all this he must consider, uninfluenced by pride and ambition on the one hand, and by an indolent and affected modesty on the other; with a single view to the greatest utility and the highest good; with a burning desire to give the most rapid movements to the cause of civil liberty, holy enterprise, and human happiness. He must ask, and be willing to follow wherever the answer may lead him; he must ask, in what particular sphere of usefulness he may find the most ready, ample, permanent, and efficient employment, for whatever of talents he possesses; and how he may most unreservedly obey the command of his Lord: "Occupy till I come."

IV. I remark again, that the characteristics of the age in which we live, give a peculiar interest to the application of this subject to young men of liberal education. Time has been, when literature and science were confined to "the schools and the cloister." Learning knew not how to walk abroad, and seldom had courage to make the attempt. Having been nursed in darkness, she could not endure, at once, the clear light of day. Having been deprived of the means of experiment and observation, and thus separated from common sense, she could not hold up her head, as she came forth and stood by the side of uneducated

wisdom and untaught, practical skill. And even where her researches were connected with the highest practical results, she rarely had courage to exhibit them to the world, and show their application to the arts of life. If, indeed, she did occasionally appear on the public stage, with the choicest fruits of her scholastic labor, ignorance scowled upon her, ridicule hissed at her, or superstition kindled for her the fire of persecution, and led her to the stake.

But times have changed. The present is an age of liberality, giving an encouragement to research, and amply rewarding every successful effort of genius. Even the boldest speculations and the wildest projects have nothing to fear, but simple failure. Persecution has ceased; and ridicule has so often received a severe rebuke from the unexpected results of ardent enterprise, that she has learned to wait for the experimental test of untried theories and unfinished schemes of Nor is there now, as formerly, any improvement. danger of losing the benefit of invention. Every progressive step in science is firmly held, and becomes a permanent advance in the cause. There is now no retrograde motion in the field of science. The march is onward; and, from permanent causes now in operation, it would seem, must still be onward.

The discovery of magnetism and the application of the polarity of the magnetic needle, in forming the mariner's compass, has opened an intercourse among the learned of all nations, which oceans cannot interrupt; and established a universal republic of letters, which war and revolution cannot overthrow.

The art of printing, too, another invention of modern times, is diffusing the light of science so extensively, and, with the aid of steam power spreading it abroad so rapidly, that the ravages of Goths and Vandals will never again overtake it in its flight, nor check its onward course. It has already multipled the records of literature and science; till "the world is full of books," constituting one vast library, which Omar cannot burn.

The age in which we live, is likewise distinguished as an age of action, enterprise and benevolence. Time has been, when philosophy was a mere speculative art, pursued only for purposes of self-indulgence, and the gratification of pride and vain curiosity. has now become a system of practical principles, cultivated and cherished for its beneficial influence on the arts of life, and the cause of good morals and pure religion. Once all science was "occult;" and was sought chiefly for the sake of its mysteries; but now it is esteemed, only so far as it is unveiled to the public mind, and rendered subservient to the conveniences of life, and the happiness of mankind. Alchemy has given way to Chemistry; and Astronomy, with its enlightening influences and guiding power, has taken the place of Astrology. The latter of these changes, aided by the mariner's compass, has whitened every ocean with the canvass of all civilized nations; and the former has covered with steam-boats the lakes and rivers of every continent. Both have thus furnished facilities for intercourse among nations, and given wings to commerce; and thus both are now scattering light and comfort and peace and joy through the world. These, however, are only particular instances of the general and wide-spread influences of the sciences, through the medium of the arts, and in their bearing on the progress of society and human happiness.

The age is, indeed, an age of action, of benevolent action; of enterprise, of pious enterprise; an age of missionary zeal and united effort to propagate the

truths of Inspiration, and send the Bible, with all its blessings, to every nation and every tribe and every family on earth. It is an age, in which science and benevolence, literature and religion have become so united, as mutually to aid each other, and send their united blessings to all mankind. In the language of another, I may add: "Religion has become inseparably linked with science, as the medium, by which she will pervade all countries, and attain to the remotest recesses of the globe; every new truth discovered, is a step gained for Christianizing the world; and every art and every accommodation, that ministers to convenience in this life, may be turned into an instrument for furthering the interests of another." It is an age, therefore, in which liberally educated young men can do much, and in which they are called to do much, to advance the cause of the Redeemer, and promote the happiness of their fellow men. these privileges and obligations of doing good, confined, as some seem to imagine, to a particular sphere of action and a particular mode of operation. In the different professions and various employments of life, learning may be brought to bear on the cause of morality and religion; of human felicity and the glory of God. And in proportion as a man's mind is cultivated and enlarged, will ordinarily be his power of usefulness and his susceptibility of happiness. such an age, therefore, the direction: "Occupy till I come," may be applied to all educated, and especially to all liberally educated young men, in whatever profession or employment they are engaged, with peculiar force and appropriateness. For in such an age, none, thus qualified to act, can be excused for inac-There is room for all, a call for all, encouragement for all, to move in some appropriate sphere of usefulness, to cultivate and employ their talents, to "occupy till their Master comes" and takes them from their labor to their everlasting reward.

V. I remark, once more, that the moral of the parable of the talents, as concentrated in the direction of our text, acquires a peculiar interest, when applied to young men, liberally educated under such institutions and in such circumstances as characterize our highly favored country. In no country is the human mind left so completely free and unrestrained, in its researches after truth. Under most of the European governments. direct restraints are imposed on the liberty of the press, on the liberty of speech, and, of course, indirectly, on the liberty of thought. Under all of them—even those which seem to admit the most unrestrained inquiry. and the most open communication of the results of inquiry—there is, in truth, much actual restraint, arising from long established prejudices and the indirect influence of old and nearly obsolete institutions; from distinctions of rank, from hereditary titles of honor. and entailments of real estate. The influence of these relics of the Feudal system is still extensively felt, in forming character; and it is felt as soon as the youthful mind is susceptible of ennobling or debasing feel-It is felt by the little boy, as he enters the primary school; and it follows him through all the stages of his education, till he reaches the stature of a man. and mingles in the scenes of active life; withering the hopes of enterprise, and blighting the fairest buds of genius; fostering pride and indolence, on the one hand, and on the other, restraining the ardor of pursuit, and often leading to utter despair and inaction.

But in this country, and especially in this part of the country, and I may add in this country alone, the human mind springs up without restraint; stands erect,

as it grows; and grows free, as the air we breathe. Here, it rises, in all the luxuriance of our own lofty pines: and shoots forth its branches, with all the vigor and hardihood of our own sturdy oaks. Here, then, if anywhere, we may hope to see it reach a state of maturity. Here, then, those who have received a liberal education, are placed under peculiar obligations, even after they have left the lecture room and the Academic hall, still to cultivate their talents, still to pursue their studies and raise a superstructure of learning, corresponding with the depth and extent of the foundation, laid during the course of their education. Yes, they are under obligations, which press on the minds of the educated young men of no other country; obligations to continue the work of disciplining their minds and enlarging their sphere of knowledge; and thus, while they are all along applying their acquisitions to practical purposes, to aid in carrying forward the work of general improvement.

In this country, too, young men of education enjoy no ordinary facilities for making this progressive improvement. It is true, we have no overgrown literary institutions, with richly endowed scholarships; nor any of that royal and princely patronage of learning, of which, under monarchical governments, so much is made, as an encouragement to literary leisure; but which too often leads to literary indolence and dissipation. We have, however, the facilities afforded by access to the richest fields of literature and science, free from the dangers and restraints, imposed in other countries and under less favorable forms of government.

It is true, our country is young; and, of course, her literature necessarily partakes of the immaturity, incident to youth. But, in some respects, we possess advantages equal or superior to those enjoyed in older countries. For, besides the accumulated results of more than two centuries of free inquiry and industrious research and observation in this new world, by our fathers, we have access, direct access through the medium of a common language, to all the treasures of learning, concentrated in the land from which our Already, indeed, it begins to be seen, fathers came. that our educated men, in some departments of learning, especially in the learned professions and in the practical application of the sciences to the arts, are assuming a respectable standing among those of older countries, whose learning is of such a character as to bless mankind. Already it has been well said, in allusion to the classical story of little Iulus, running by the side of his father, that American literature is steadily and rapidly advancing along with that of Great Britain, though "not yet with equal steps." We may add, however, continuing the classical allusion, that, if properly encouraged, it may be expected soon to outstrip its parent; since it carries no oppressive burthen on its shoulders.

To all these considerations, it may be added, that the immediate and urgent call, in this country, for a practical application of all the acquisitions made in literature and science, furnishes a strong inducement for educated young men to persevere in the work of self-education. It is not here, as in some countries, a question of birth and patronage, who shall occupy the post of honor, of influence, of distinguished usefulness. But here the path of distinction and glory, distinction connected with benevolence, glory springing from active and useful employment, is open, and equally open, to all. Here, then, if anywhere in the world, the direction, "Occupy till I come," addressed to edu-

cated young men, possesses peculiar point and force. For here the character of our social, religious and civil institutions, with all the peculiar circumstances of their origin, come in, with all the previously named considerations, to give interest and directness to the application. Here, then, every young man of enlarged and disciplined mind, is urged by the purest and most exalted motives, to improve his talents, and consecrate them to the service of his God, his country, and the world. Let such, therefore, and let us all, my brethren, hear and regard the kind and authoritative direction of our Lord and final Judge: "Occupy till I come."

# LECTURE XXI.

## MORAL EDUCATION.\*

#### EPHESIANS VI. 4.

YE FATHERS, PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN TO WRATH; BUT BRING THEM UP IN THE MURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD.

Among the various theories of morals, which have been proposed and published to the world, and which generally lead to the same practical results, that seems to me to be the most simple and the most easily illustrated and comprehended, which makes the will of God at once the rule of action and the foundation of moral obligation. So far as obligation is concerned, the theory may be thus stated: All duty grows out of some relation; and all relations, which give rise to duties, are constituted by a direct act of our Creator, who made us what we are, and placed us where we are; or they are formed by man, in obedience to a divine command, or at least, in accordance with the Hence, in order to illustrate a duty endivine will. joined in the Scriptures; or to discover the will of God where no distinct precept is given in the Bible, we have only to analyze the relation, out of which the du-

<sup>\*</sup> The argument in this discourse constituted the substance of a lecture previously delivered before the American Institute of Education. But being revised and rewritten, it was delivered in its present form before the twenty-sixth Congress of the United States, in the Spring of 1840.

ty grows, and contemplate it in its various aspects and bearings.

Now, of all the relations, whether natural or instituted, which exist among men, none is more important to human happiness, or more fruitful in responsibilities and prerogatives, than that which parents and children bear to each other. From it flow all the duties connected with education, and all the rights, in-In consequence of this relation, cident to those duties. it becomes the duty of parents, to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and to them, as a farther consequence of the same relation, belong all the rights, necessary to a faithful and successful discharge of this duty. Both the obligation and the power may, indeed, be transferred temporarily, partially and, as in the case of the death of parents, entirely, to guardians and instructors. But neither the one nor the other can be renounced or cancelled. while the relation itself, whether natural or assumed, remains. They always follow the relation, wherever it is found, in all its changes and modifications; and just as far and as long as the relation is modified or transferred, by providential changes, by civil authority, by voluntary assumption, or by mutual compact, they are changed with it, and become the duties and prerogatives of those, to whom the transfer of the relation Hence the whole course and business of education, from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, by whomsoever conducted, should be conducted on the principles of the parental relation.

The direction of the apostle, in our text, therefore, may be applied to guardians and instructors, to trustees of schools, and legislators, as well as to parents, so far as children and youth are committed to their care, and placed under their protection and supervision; and it may be applied to them, both as it regards the involved duties and the incidental rights. They are bound to do, and have authority to do, for their wards and pupils, and those who are in any degree committed to their care, what a parent should do in the same circumstances. They are required "not to provoke them to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord:" to treat them. and see that they are treated by others, not as sentient and mortal creatures merely; but as rational, moral, and immortal beings: to endeavor, so far as the trust is delegated to them, and so far as they have assumed the responsibility, to train them for active and useful employment in this life, and for blessedness in the world to come: to educate them in accordance with their nature and destination, and thus fit them to accomplish, in the best manner, the great purpose and end of their being.

The text viewed in this light, and contemplated with this extended interpretation, very naturally brings before us the subject of Moral Education; a subject, as we shall discover in the sequel of the discourse, of deep interest and great practical importance to the rising generation and to our country. And though some things may be said which might, under other circumstances, seem a little too secular in their character and bearing for a religious discourse; I hope they may be thought not unsuitable for me to say, as a parent and for many years a professional teacher; and not unappropriate to be addressed to parents and legislators, on whose counsels and influence the education and character of the youth of our country, and the character and future condition of the country itself may very much depend.

Education, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, denotes the whole training of the physical, intellectual and moral powers of man. It includes every influence which is exerted, and every circumstance which has a bearing, in the formation of character: everything which serves to awaken and control the original susceptibilities of human nature; to develop, exercise, and mature all the powers and faculties of soul and body. In the language of philosophical poetry (a little modified and extended) I add, ''tis education forms the man.' The best system of education, therefore, is that which so disciplines all the powers. and trains all the faculties of the child or youth, as best to fit him for duty and for happiness; as most thoroughly to qualify him for the station to which he is destined, and the sphere in which he is to move; as to enable him most efficiently to act his part, and most perfectly to answer the great design of his existence in time and in eternity.

Were it my object to speak of the subject at large, I should follow the ordinary division of physical, intellectual and moral education. Physical education, I should say, in its highest perfection, is that system of diet, exercise and regimen, by which health, strength and activity are best secured; the powers of the body so developed and trained, as to produce symmetry of form and harmony and energy of action; and thus to render all the organs and functions of the physical system subservient to the higher and more enduring faculties of the man.

Intellectual education, I should add, does not consist, as some seem to suppose, merely or principally in the acquisition of knowledge. But it is such a disciplining of the mind as prepares it for the acquisition, retention and communication, as well as practical ap-

plication of knowledge; such a training of the intellectual faculties, as gives vigor, proportion and symmetry to the whole mind; or, in other words, it is the formation of such habits of association, as brings the attention under the control of the will, gives acuteness and accuracy to the powers of investigation, and produces, at once, a ready and retentive memory, in connection with a lively fancy and a rich imagination.

So far as education involves the acquisition of knowledge, its utility is principally incidental or prospective. It is not so much the business of the teacher to crowd the mind of his pupil with facts and instil into it his own principles and deductions, as it is to teach him the art of observation, classification and arrangement for practical use; to direct the inquiring mind in its researches after truth and knowledge; in the often quoted and trite, but highly significant language of poetry, "to teach the young idea how to shoot."

"There is," says Dr. Brown, "a philosophical spirit, which is far more valuable, than any limited acquirements of philosophy; and the cultivation of which, therefore, is the most precious advantage, that can be derived from the lessons and studies of many academic years." In accordance with this remark, is the noted figurative observation of Locke, that "every man should know the length of his line;" or, without a figure, should learn to limit his inquiries by the extent of his faculties, and confine them to the proper field of observation.

Indeed, it is less the object of education to awaken curiosity, than to direct its course and restrain its wild and impetuous flights. The perfection of intellectual education, by no means depends on the eagerness of research, or on the quantity of knowledge actually acquired. A man may have read much, and may remember all that he has read, and yet be scarcely distinguished from an idiot. He may still be destitute of common sense and practical skill; and his confused learning and misapplied knowledge may render him a mere pedant or buffoon. It has been well said by Dugald Stewart, that "the most essential object of education is, first, to cultivate all the various principles of our nature, both speculative and active, in such a manner as to bring them to the greatest perfection of which they are susceptible; and secondly, to watch over the impressions and associations of early life, and thus secure the mind against the influence of prevailing errors; and as far as possible, to engage its prepossessions on the side of truth."

The period of pupilage to the scholar, is like the time of apprenticeship to the mechanic; and the object of the one bears a strong resemblance to that of the other. It is not the business of the mechanic, during his apprenticeship, to accumulate a stock of lumber; but to exercise his muscles and acquire the use of his tools. So it is not the principal object of the scholar, during his pupilage, to lay up a stock of intellectual lumber, a mass of speculative and useless knowledge; but to learn the art of study, to ascertain the powers of his mind and acquire skill in employing them; or, to continue the figure, it is to obtain the use of his intellectual tools, and give vigor and activity to his intellectual muscles.

A well disciplined mind, in the course of its discipline, does indeed often make rich acquisition of knowledge. But it is knowledge classified, arranged, incorporated with the intellectual powers and rendered a constituent part of the mind itself. It is not held by mere accidental and arbitrary association, as a thing

of memory alone; the borrowed sentiments of other minds. It becomes his own. It is appropriated. Like the food, which nourishes the body, it is digested and diffused through the whole intellectual system, sustaining and invigorating every part; or, like the elements of nature, which go to support and increase a luxuriant vegetable, it becomes assimilated to the mind itself, conformed to its habits of association, and incorporated with its powers; causing it to expand, and giving it enlargement, strength and vigor.

Were it, as I said before, the object of this discourse to discuss the subject of education in general, I should here speak of the comparative influence of native genius and well directed industry, in producing intellectual greatness. I should admit an original difference of intellectual capacity among men: equal, perhaps, to the difference in their physical organization. I should accede to phrenologists one grand point in their system, that there is a relation of the one to the other, of the mind to the body; especially, so far as it regards the size and form and healthy state of the great organ of perception and thought and feeling. I should hence allow the impossibility, by any system of education or combination of circumstances of bringing all minds to a common standard. And yet I should contend, (and contend most strenuously, because I consider the point of vital importance.) that the actual difference in the intellectual characters of men, with a few extraordinary exceptions, depends principally on education. I should strenuously maintain, that industry and perseverence, under judicious guidance, will generally reach a point, in the scale of usefulness and happiness, which uncultivated talents, however splendid, can never approach. For genius, undisciplined and uncontrolled, is like a brilliant meteor,

which with a dazzling light flits across your path and in a moment disappears, rather bewildering than aiding to direct your steps. But a common mind, the mind of ordinary capacity, properly disciplined, and improved by persevering and judicious study, resembles the polar star, which, though it may seem to shine but feebly, still sheds a steady light, and becomes an unerring guide to the benighted traveller.

But our present business is with moral education; moral education, in its connection with intellectual; and especially in its bearings on personal happiness and the great interests of society.

Man is a moral being, possessing a moral nature; capable of feeling moral obligation, capable of discerning moral relations, and of discharging moral duties, capable of understanding and obeying law; sustaining the relation of absolute dependence on God, and capable of loving him and obeying his will; sustaining various reciprocal and mutual relations to his fellow men, and capable of loving them and promoting their happiness.

Now, this capacity renders children and youth susceptible of moral education; and this education consists essentially in cultivating their moral powers and susceptibilities, whether in the school or the family, by instruction or by self-discipline; and thus rendering them, what, with the blessing of Heaven, they are capable of becoming, virtuous and happy; "adorers of God and benefactors of mankind."

Among the moral powers of man, indeed, the essential moral power, to which all others are subordinate and subsidiary, and without which all others would be perfectly inefficient, is *Conscience*; or that capacity, by which we are enabled, instinctively and instantaneously, to feel approbation of what we view as

virtuous and right, and disapprobation of what we account as vicious or wrong. Or, to give a definition more precise and exclusive, it is a susceptibility of pleasure or pain, as our actions agree or disagree with our views of duty; with the standard of moral obligation and the rules of moral conduct, which we have adopted.

Whatever, therefore, has a tendency to increase or diminish this original susceptibility, must have an important bearing on moral education, and the formation of moral character. For, like every other original principle of human nature, this may be cherished, purified and strengthened; and all this must be done to constitute what the Scriptures denominate, "a good conscience." Or, on the other hand, it may be neglected, perverted and even stupified, or in the language of Scripture, "seared as with a hot iron;" and then it becomes "an evil conscience;" useless, or worse than useless, for the purposes of forming character and regulating conduct: failing to perform its appropriate office, as prompter and reprover; silent, when its voice should be heard like "seven thunders;" or speaking so feebly and equivocally, as only to mock and deceive.

A good moral education, then, must provide for the direct culture of the conscience, by calling it early into exercise and giving it frequent opportunities to act; as well as by guarding it, in its feeble state, against the rude attacks of temptation, and aiding it in the execution of its incipient decisions.

Here two opposite mistakes of parents and teachers frequently occur. In some plans of education, arbitrary command and absolute authority become the invariable substitute for the decisions of conscience, directing every action, controlling every propensity, and leaving no opportunity for the conscience of the

ehild or pupil to be consulted or exercised. And thus the faculty itself is never, or but very imperfectly developed. It becomes feeble and sickly; if, indeed, it has life and vigor enough to act at all, and form anything like positive and independent character.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the conscience of a tender child, or an inexperienced youth, is trusted too soon, or too far; left to act and contend, without aid or advice; exposed single-handed, to the rudest and most violent attacks of the tempter. Hence it is often overcome and led captive, before it has gathered strength by exercise and discipline, to meet its numerous enemies, as they proceed from a corrupt heart within, or a wicked world without.

Thus in education, as in everything else at the present day, we have our ultraism and our anti-ultraism. The true course here, as in most other cases, unquestionably is the middle course: "Medio tutissimus ibis." If you would secure to the child or the youth. you are educating, "a good conscience," avoid the two extremes of entire control and unlimited exposure to temptation. Both are generally fatal to virtuous, manly and independent character. So far as education can give direct assistance to conscience, it must be done by securing its early development, and affording it opportunity for full exercise and steady action; and, at the same time, by watching over its movements, throwing light upon its path, aiding it by advice, strengthening its decisions by authority, and everywhere guarding it, as far as possible, against the sudden and insidious attacks of temptation.

Closely connected with conscience, in constituting man a moral agent, is *Reason*; which if not in itself a moral power, is nevertheless indispensable to moral agency and just accountability. Reason is that power

of the mind, by which we discover relations; either at once, by a single comparison; or by deduction, or a succession of comparisons; and the result in both cases is the same, a judgment, a conviction of truth, either certain or probable.

Now, as a moral power, or as connected with the great moral power, of which we have been speaking, reason discovers and leads us to feel moral relations; and thus becomes subservient to conscience, and even necessary to its salutary operations. moral education, therefore, the one must be cultivated in connection with the other. For if a man reasons wrong, and forms erroneous opinions on moral subjects, his conscience, following his judgment, will fail to guide him in the path of virtue; nor will it reprove him in opposition to his perverted judgment, even for the grossest iniquity. Thus the bloody persecutor drags his innocent victim to the stake, and applies to him the faggot and the torch, with as little compunction of conscience, as the faithful magistrate feels, when he pronounces the righteous sentence of the law, on the murderer of his father or the betrayer of his country.

Indeed, where our opinions are correct, our judgment sound, the approving or condemning sentence of conscience will harmonize with the decisions of Heaven. But where our opinions are erroneous, or our judgment perverted by passion and prejudice, our feelings of approbation or disapprobation will follow these erroneous opinions and this perverted judgment; and may come at last, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, to be directly at variance with the will of God. Hence men may persuade themselves, that they are doing God service; while like that bloody persecutor on his way to Damascus, they are opposing his cause, and

breathing out threatenings and vengeance against his people.

In forming rules for moral education, therefore, we should never forget, that while moral sensibility or conscience is to be carefully cherished and cultivated; reason must likewise be trained and exercised in connection with it, or it will dwell in darkness; and its movements will be uncertain and inefficient, giving neither purity nor stability to character. We should never forget, that the appropriate office of conscience is not that of an instructor, but that of a prompter or reprover; that it was not designed to discover truth; that it cannot of itself distinguish between right and wrong; that it acts only in accordance with moral judgment, with preconceived opinions, with rules of action already settled in the mind. We should remember, that conscience without reason is blind; that its monitions, while under the influence of erroneous opinions and a perverted judgment, are coincident with the dictates of a perverse and unsubdued will, producing nothing but obstinacy and rebellion against iust authority; indeed, that the very conscientiousness of an ignorant man often counteracts the best natural sympathies, hardens his heart and renders him a worse member of society. And remembering this, we should never forget the practical lesson, which it teaches on the subject of moral education; nor fail to encourage the youth, and even the child, to think and reason for himself; to investigate truth and to form deliberate and independent opinions, on all practical subjects.

I know a different course, in these days of double ultraism, has been recommended. It has been said, that children are not to be reasoned with, but instructed, directed, commanded; they are to be taught to believe, because you affirm, and act because you make the re-

quisition. The whole system of education, so far as it regards moral sentiment and moral conduct, must, according to this theory, rest on authority, be maintained by coercion, and result in blind submission. The very idea of furnishing evidence to produce faith or secure obedience is ridiculed, as savoring of weakness and effeminacy; as a departure from the good old stern way of education; as the fruit of modern degeneracy and rash innovation; as at once exhibiting and fostering a spirit of radicalism, insubordination and licentiousness. But it seems to me that this theory, especially as it is served up in some recent periodical publications, is itself ultraism of the worst kind, and carried to the greatest extreme. It must have originated with those who are given to hypothesis; who have more theory than practical knowledge; to whom Providence has never committed the care of children, nor awakened in their bosoms the sympathies which belong only to parents, and flourish only around the family altar.

Now, while I admit that there is an extreme of weak indulgence in education; and that the tendency in this country, for the last half-century, has been toward that extreme, I am obliged to contend that the doctrines recently advocated, and to which I have just alluded, lead to a worse extreme, involve a grosser absurdity, and would, if generally adopted, produce more pernicious consequences, than the most extravagant innovations of the wildest visionary in the cause of liberty and self-government. While I would encourage obedience, even implicit obedience, I enter my protest against the doctrine of passive obedience. Obedience truly we must have, obedience to authority; but let it be active obedience to rightful authority. While too, I would advocate the cause of faith, if you

please, implicit faith, I must contend for a rational faith, in opposition to blind credulity; for a faith resting on conviction, supported by evidence, and "working by love."

Against the theory of education which rejects all appeals to reason and conscience, sympathy and affection; which demands passive obedience, implicit confidence, unconditional submission, I again and forever enter my protest. If you would educate children and youth to be men, moral men, men of moral courage and high moral character; to act for themselves, and to act from principle, you must encourage them to think and judge, as well as to feel and act; you must appeal to reason, strive to awaken conscience, and aid them in forming habits of reflection, thorough investigation and firmness of purpose. You must not appeal to the rod, to physical force and coercive measures, even in training the earliest childhood, much less in controlling the wayward propensities of youth, till you have exhausted the resources of moral power. Where this, after thorough trial, fails; where the understanding has already become darkened and the eye of reason blinded, through the influence of passion and prejudice and vice; or where the will has usurped the place of conscience, and the child become obstinately disobedient; where all appeals to the reason and the conscience have proved unavailing, resort must be had to the rod; appeal must be made to fear and terror, to pains and penalties.

This is in accordance with the analogy of the divine government. Here the inspired direction of the wise man comes in and applies with full force: "Chasten thy son while there is hope; and let not thy soul spare for his crying." In cases of obstinacy and perverseness, all reasoning and persuasion are vain. Here

stern authority must be exercised, and judicious punishment inflicted, till submission is yielded and reformation produced.

But in all ordinary cases, corporal punishment is unnecessary; and, as usually administered, extremely injurious to the temper and character of the subject. Judicious and persevering appeals to reason and conscience and affection, both with children and vouth. are sufficient for all the common purposes of government in the family and in the school. At least, it is always safe to begin with these. By adopting the other course; by beginning with the exercise of stern authority, and thus neglecting to cultivate and call into exercise the moral powers of children and youth. you may, indeed, succeed in procuring immediate and temporary submission, but you fail of teaching them. what they most need to learn, self-government. You fail of forming virtuous and manly character; you train up a generation of slaves; you educate your children to become fit subjects for the Pope of Rome or the Autocrat of Russia; you do all you can, to render them unfit for American citizens, Christian freemen, denizens of heaven.

Thus in every good system of moral education, reason in connection with conscience must be cultivated, exercised, and, to a certain extent, left to follow out its own conclusions, free from the shackles of human authority. But since reason, at best, is exceedingly limited in its researches, and peculiarly liable to error in its conclusions; since it is chained down to earth, and confined within the narrow bounds of the present life; since its observations cannot reach other worlds, nor its eye penetrate the darkness of the grave, it must be aided by revelation, or it will fail to enlighten con-

science, and guide securely in the path of duty and in the way of life.

You cannot take a single step in the business of educating immortal beings for immortal life, without the aid of that gospel, which "brings life and immortality to light." If then you would train your children to virtue and happiness, you must proceed to the work with the Bible in your hands, and with the spirit of the Bible, or rather the Spirit of God, in your hearts; and you must so proceed, as to place this blessed book in the hands of your pupil, and lead him to read for himself, examine for himself, and apply to himself its sublime doctrines; to read with a humble and believing heart; seeking to learn, that he may do, the will of God; ready to receive, and to receive without gainsaying, the sentiments and principles, which these Holy Oracles inculcate.

Any system of education, which excludes the Holy Scriptures must fail, forever fail, of securing the great objects of moral discipline and social happiness. I wish I had time to go into a full discussion of this interesting topic. I think, ample proof of this position might easily be gathered from the history of paganism and infidelity; from a view of civil and social institutions, domestic economy, and individual and personal character and happiness. Without the Bible, you may, indeed, sometimes produce external morality, mechanical virtue, passive obedience to human authority: but you can never thus produce intrinsic virtue, pure morality, social security, civil liberty, personal holiness; you can never thus form a character, adapted to the various duties of time and the blessedness of eternity; a benevolent character for the good of mankind, a holy character for the everlasting service

and enjoyment of a Holy God, a character positively virtuous, founded on principle, producing happiness, and enduring forever.

Another part of the human constitution, capable of being modified by education; and, on account of its influence on moral character, requiring great care to secure its full development, and to furnish it with due restraint and proper regulation, is Imagination. out stopping here to define the term, I may remark, that all our sympathies and sensibilities depend very much on the vividness of the conceptions, which awaken them. If, therefore, action is desired, and if activity is superinduced by feeling, it is evident, that the more lively the imagination is, the more powerful will be the excited emotion; and, consequently, the more prompt and vigorous the resulting action. Hence the cultivation and due regulation of the imagination, become highly important, in a system of education-indispensable, indeed, to exalted virtue, and to pure and permanent felicity. And hence peculiar watchfulness and care are requisite, lest this power, in the youthful mind. be suffered. on the one hand, to slumber, till sensibility dies, and the age of feeling is past; or, on the other, be permitted to run wild, till the awakened feeling breaks forth, like a mountain-torrent, overpowering the judgment, and leading to unrestrained action and the inconsistent ravings of the wildest enthusiasm; or, what is worse still, be allowed to rouse the sympathies and play upon the sensibilities, while there is no room for action, and of course no active principle formed; till these susceptibilities are completely exhausted; till the springs of moral action lose their elasticity and power, and all moral sensibility is eradicated from the soul; till, in the language of sacred metaphor, "the

heart is hardened," "the conscience seared," and the man "past feeling."

"It is a law of our nature," says Bishop Butler, and, we may add, a law exhibiting the wisdom and goodness of our Creator, "that passive impressions are weakened by repetition; while active principles are strengthened by exercise." Thus the emotion of pity, or compassion, is diminished by repeated scenes of distress; while, in the mean time, the principle of benevolent action, if kept in exercise, gathers strength by practice, at length produces a confirmed habit of doing good, and sometimes continues to operate powerfully and efficiently, almost without emotion. But if no action follows the emotions of pity in their incipient state, and the susceptibility be suffered to wear away and spend itself in unavailing sighs and tears, without establishing any active principle or forming any active habit, the very foundation of this virtue will be torn away; and the child or youth thus dealt with, will grow up to vice, hardness of heart, and perhaps deeds of cruelty and blood.

Hence the importance of securing to the cause of virtue the first awakened emotions of the heart, by giving them proper direction, and affording them opportunity to settle into principle and flow out in action. Hence, too, the danger of all excitement, which does not lead to action, or at least to a fixed and determined resolution, which partakes of the nature, and, in a moral view, constitutes the essence of action. Hence, I may add, the pernicious consequences of novel-reading and theatrical amusements; inasmuch as they rouse the imagination and awaken the sensibilities, often beyond the scenes of real life; and when there is no call for action, nor scarcely any for form-

ing the purpose of action; inasmuch as the sensibilities of our nature are thus exhausted, the sympathies worn away, and the very foundations of virtue removed, before any habit of action is formed, or any active principle is superinduced.

How many youth have had their heads turned and their hearts hardened by this process! How many have thus been thrown into an ideal world, and disqualified to live and act and be happy and useful in a world of realities, in our world as it is! Oh, that parents and legislators and instructors, and all who have the guardian care of children and youth, and possess a controlling influence in forming the morals and manners of the rising generation, as well as those who are engaged in self-education, would consider these things, and act with a wise reference to this great principle of human nature, this mighty spring of human action, this exhaustless fountain of human felicity or woe.

I know of no consideration of greater importance, in its bearing on moral education, than this; nor any, which is more worthy of the regard of the philosopher and the Christian. I have not time, however, to illustrate and enforce it, in this place. Let it simply be observed here, that in order at once to develop, exercise and control the youthful imagination, and thus secure its influence to the cause of virtue and happiness, the whole course of early reading and observation should be watched over with parental solicitude, and directed with great wisdom and practical skill.

To these remarks on the culture and training of the conscience, the reason, and the imagination, I might add particular observations on the means of directing and controlling the passions, appetites and various propensities; indeed, all the original susceptibilities and powers of the human mind. They are all capable of

being modified by external circumstances; and, therefore, more or less subject to the influence of education. But the statements already made, and the illustrations already given, present a view of Moral Education sufficiently broad and extensive for a single discourse; and furnish abundant matter for practical application and personal improvement.

The first practical observation, which this view of the subject suggests to my mind, is, that moral and intellectual education should never be separated. Indeed, the connection is so natural and intimate, that neither of them can be carried to a high degree of perfection without the aid of the other. Virtue is always favorable to high intellectual attainments, and to deep and persevering research after truth and science; while a well cultivated mind, with enlarged and correct views of truth, is essential to the exercise of the higher virtues, and to all successful efforts in the cause of benevolence and human happiness.

It is true, a man may be a good man, pious and benevolent, with but little knowledge and a contracted intellectual training; yet his piety will be likely to degenerate into bigotry or fanaticism; and his benevolence into a sickly sensibility or a pernicious liberality: at best, his good influence must be comparatively limited. It is true, likewise, that native genius, with the facilities now furnished for literary and scientific acquisition, though connected with licentiousness in sentiment and practice, may sometimes shoot forth its branches, covered with the richest foliage, and producing a luxuriant growth of fruit, beautiful to the eye, and sweet to the taste. But its leaves will soon wither, and its fruit will always prove poisonous, like the apples of Sodom and the grapes of Gomorrah. The most brilliant talents, and the highest intellectual attainments, without moral and religious principle, will only enlarge the capacity of the possessor for mischief and misery; will make him more wretched, and render him more injurious to the character and happiness of all whom his influence can reach. Let moral and intellectual education, then, never be separated. If in any case the former must be limited, let the latter be limited with it. If the latter be granted upon a large and liberal scale, let the former come in for an equal share of interest and attention.

Hence I observe, secondly, that in every school and literary institution, from the highest to the lowest grade, provision should be made for moral and religious instruction. I know, it has been objected, that in these days of division and party-strife, such instruction is liable to degenerate into mere dogmatism on the one hand, and blind credulity on the other. Such a result ought certainly to be deprecated. Against the theory of education, calculated and designed to produce it, I have already entered my protest. And I now add, against everything which has the least tendency to such a result, let provision be carefully made.

The doctrine of the union of "Church and State," odious as it is, is not more odious, in my apprehension, than that which would unite literature and learning, in our schools, with any prescribed form of religion. I would as soon combine civil and ecclesiastical authority in what is called a religious establishment, as limit the advantages of learning and the privileges of literary institutions to sect and party. In both these cases, there should be no interference of the civil power.

The sooner the tendency to this sectarianism of schools in our country is checked the better. Recently it has become a common thing to establish sectarian schools and colleges, under sectarian names; and in

my apprehension, this has done more to degrade learning and excite a prejudice against moral and religious instruction, than everything else. It is time to withhold these exclusive and sectarian charters. institution of learning be incorporated with exclusive privileges, and placed under the exclusive patronage and control of any particular sect or denomination of religionists. Let us have a republic of letters, of literary as well as civil institutions. Let the common school and the college, everywhere in our land, be open, and equally open, to all. There let all stand on equal ground; and be encouraged, with candor and reverence, to inquire after truth, free from all ecclesiastical restraint or embarrassment. Let all, who seriously worship God, be permitted to worship him in the place and in the manner, which best harmonizes with their views of truth and duty. Let there be no constraint placed on conscience; nor any violence offered to reason, or even to innocent prejudice. Let these precautions be taken, and these rules observed; and moral and religious instruction may be freely and fully imparted, without even the charge of sectarian influence; without complaint, except from those who are opposed to all moral and religious instruction; "who love darkness and rejoice in iniquity," who are enemies to virtue, to their country and its institutions, to mankind and their improvement, to God and his holv law.

A third obvious remark, suggested by the view we have taken of this subject is, that the Bible ought to be used in all our schools, from the highest to the lowest, either as a reading book or a classic; either to be studied in the original languages, or to be read and expounded in our vernacular tongue.

A fourth practical observation, equally obvious and

important is, that a good moral character and correct moral sentiments are indispensable qualifications in a teacher of children and youth; qualifications, for the want of which no intellectual qualities or literary and scientific attainments can atone. But time will not permit me to attempt an illustration of these and other practical remarks, which naturally flow from this copious subject. Besides, it is my intention, on the next occasion afforded me for addressing this assembly, to renew this general subject, and speak more particularly of *intellectual* education, and the best mode of conducting it in connection with the highest moral culture.

In the mean time, let parents, guardians, instructors, legislators, and all who have the care and supervision of the rising generation, as well as those who have finished their pupilage, and are educating themselves, consider the importance of this subject, in its bearing on individual character and happiness; and on the preservation of our civil institutions and the welfare of our country.

To parents, guardians and teachers I may say in conclusion, the consequences which will flow from the manner in which you regard and treat this subject, are of no ordinary character. The children and youth, whom you are educating, and over whose education you have an influence, are *moral* and immortal beings. They are forming characters for eternity. They are susceptible of happiness and misery, and their condition in time and in eternity will depend on the characters which they form.

You live, too, in a land of liberty, under free institutions; and the preservation of these institutions and the continuance of this liberty depend, under God, on the character of those into whose hands you are about to commit them. What is to be the future condition of our beloved country? How are its free institutions to be preserved? Do you answer by intellectual education; by diffusing knowledge through all the ranks of society? This is unquestionably important; indispensable, as I hope to be able to show hereafter, to the preservation of civil liberty and the security of social order. But will this alone accomplish the object; is this the grand, conservative principle of our government? Of what avail is knowledge without virtue, intelligence without moral principle, the education of the head without connecting with it the education of the heart?

Should a system of education prevail in our country, leaving out the influence of the Bible, discarding moral and religious instruction, our free institutions would soon be swept away, and the country itself would be brought under the desolating scourge of anarchy, or the iron hand of despotism. I dare not indulge the thought of such an event, even in imagination. I dare not look forward upon a scene so dark and dismal. I dare not contemplate in prospect the recurrence of a French revolution on American ground. I dare not anticipate the time, when Romanism, infidelity, licentiousness and violence, with giant-strides, may traverse our country in all its length and breadth; deluging it in blood, and sweeping it with the besom of destruction. I would rather turn from this dark side of the picture, and, though it may prove but an optical illusion, view a brighter scene. I would rather indulge the hope, that some mighty moral influence, under the fostering hand of education, and through the kind interposition of Providence, may come in and stay our downward course, sustain our tottering institutions and save our country.

## LECTURE XXII.

## INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION.\*

## PROVERBS VIII. 10.

RECEIVE MY INSTRUCTION, AND NOT SILVER; AND KNOWLEDGE, RATHER THAN CHOICE GOLD.

MEN are so constituted, that one period of their existence has a direct bearing on their character and condition, in that which is to succeed; and furnishes opportunity, to prepare for its duties and enjoyments. Thus the instruction, and experience of childhood and youth tend to prepare the young for the pursuits of manhood. Thus too, the varied employments of mortal life, and the discipline to which men are here subjected by Divine Providence, may be considered as means of preparation for a future state, constituting their education for eternity.

Education, therefore, has with great propriety been described as "a system of means to develop the powers and form the character of the pupil," for the condition and employment in life, for which his natural powers are adapted. Education, according to this view of it, includes all the means used and expedients adopted, to awaken his dormant sensibilities, to strengthen his various capacities, both physical and

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was prepared and delivered at Washington, in connection with the preceding lecture. The substance of it, however, was subsequently delivered at Providence before "the American Institute of Education."

mental; and, at the same time, to direct and purify the feelings of his heart; and thus to form the whole man, rendering him in all respects what he was designed to be; fitting him for the most energetic action of which he is capable, and the highest happiness of which he is susceptible. Hence it has sometimes been divided into three branches, in reference to the body, the mind and the heart; and, according to this division, considered under the three heads of Physical, Intellectual and Moral Education.

Having recently addressed you on the last of these topics, I propose to speak to-day more particularly on the subject of *Intellectual Education*. And to this our text very naturally leads. Addressing his son, the man of inspired wisdom says: "Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold." Indeed, the term, education, even without a restraining epithet, is generally used in this limited sense. Children are sent to the primary school and youth to higher seminaries, principally, perhaps, too much, with a view to their intellectual improvement; and the place of their education is usually selected, with sole reference to the facilities furnished for obtaining knowledge and securing mental discipline.

While, however, the general topic of discourse, thus announced, will confine our inquiries principally to mental culture and the acquisition of knowledge, it will be my object to show how this branch of education may be pursued, in consistency with the claims of the other two co-ordinate branches, so as to preserve health and secure the highest moral improvement; so as best to secure "a sound mind in a sound body," in connection with a pure heart and a holy life. Indeed, this view of the subject brings it within the province of the religious teacher, and renders it a suit-

able subject for the Sabbath and the sanctuary. I propose to myself, in this discourse another limitation. I shall not only confine my remarks principally to the intellectual branch of education, to the discipline of the mind and the acquisition of knowledge, as connected with the other branches; but I intend to speak especially of the active part of intellectual education; of the seeking, rather than the mere receiving of knowledge; of the exercise of the energies of the mind in the pursuit of its appropriate objects, by study and effort; rather than of the imparting of knowledge, through the agency of others, to the mind in a passive and indolent state.

More definitely then, it will be the object of this discourse to point out and enforce the duties of parents, teachers and those who have the supervision of schools and literary institutions, in making provision for the intellectual education of the rising generation; to prescribe the means and suggest the motives, by which children and youth may be, and should be, induced to apply themselves diligently and vigorously to prescribed studies; to ascertain by what methods they may be stimulated to effort and urged forward to the highest intellectual attainments, of which they are capable, consistently with the development of their bodily powers and the perfection of their moral nature.

The subject thus considered can hardly fail to interest every reflecting mind and benevolent heart. It will be found to be a subject of great practical importance, and peculiarly extensive in its bearings on human happiness; and, therefore, full of high responsibilities, and pressing its claims, with peculiar urgency, on all to whom it is applicable.

What then are the means to be used, and the mo-

tives to be presented, to incite children and youth to study with the greatest diligence and energy; and thus to secure to them the highest intellectual cultivation and attainments, consistently with the development of their physical powers, and the formation of moral and Christian character? Before a direct answer to this inquiry is attempted, a few general preliminary remarks seem necessary, to guard still further against misapprehension of the question and misapplication of the answer.

- 1. Let it be remembered, then, as already intimated, that we include, in the idea of intellectual education, the discipline of the mind, as well as the acquisition of knowledge. Indeed, a cultivated and well balanced mind; habits of attention, application and self-control, with correct rules of investigation are of more avail to the great purposes of life, than the largest stock of knowledge, undigested, without arrangement, and subject to the arbitrary and capricious direction of erratic genius and undisciplined talents. All expedients, therefore, which do not call for the latent energies of the mind, and give exercise, activity and strength to its powers, are of little value for the great purposes of education.
- 2. Let it be remembered likewise, that although we limit the topics of this discourse to intellectual education, to the exclusion of those branches of education, which are purely physical or moral; yet, as likewise intimated before, we do not intend to disregard the mutual relation which subsists among them; nor forget the bearing which the method of promoting the one, under consideration, may have on the other two. In forming a system of education, therefore, a prerequisite should be, to admit no provisions, nor resort to any expedients, however productive of study and in-

tellectual improvement; if they are inconsistent with pure moral principle and elevated moral character, or pernicious in their influence on bodily health and physical energy.

- 3. Let it be remembered, moreover, that the view which we propose to take of intellectual education, not only embraces mental discipline; but it has special reference to the symmetry of the mind; a due regard to the harmonious development of all its faculties; a proportionate attention to the various branches of knowledge and the different kinds of study, calculated to produce this development and secure this symmetry. It will be one object of the discourse, therefore, to show, that every measure proposed for the purpose of stimulating to study, should be tried by its tendency to form the whole mind, and give it a complete finish, a perfect symmetry.
- 4. Let it be remembered, finally, that, while we attempt to test the various plans proposed and motives suggested, in order to produce study, and incite to industry in the acquisition of knowledge; we intend to place great stress on the particular direction which is given to this industry, and the specific views with which the acquisitions are made. The difference between a showy and a solid education must not be forgotten. Study for a temporary purpose, and that which is pursued for permanent effect, it should be remembered, are very different employments, and lead to very different results. The one produces intellectual giants, the other mere dwarfs in literature and science.

All expedients, therefore, which produce mere temporary and fitful excitement, without bearing steadily on the mind, and producing uniform and persevering effort; which lead to literary quackery; which satisfy the student with the semblance, without the reality, of

knowledge; which cause the pupil to make all his efforts for the purpose of display before his instructor and fellow students; and to exhaust all his energies, in putting on the appearance of scholarship, instead of storing his mind with durable knowledge, and training it for future and permanent acquisitions; all such expedients should be discarded, at once and forever. No measures should be employed, to stimulate to study, but those which will prompt to the pursuit of real, substantial, enduring knowledge; such knowledge as is associated in the mind on general principles, incorporated with the mind itself, and made a constituent part of the intellectual structure, instead of that light and superficial knowledge, which floats on the very surface of the mind, or hangs upon the very tip of the tongue; knowledge, sought for the recitation-room alone, and not for the purpose of being laid up in the "store-house of the mind" for future use.

Too many of these degrading expedients have been recently employed, both in our primary schools and higher seminaries; producing in children and youth, an insatiable appetite for novelty, an unconquerable love of change. Too much of this superficial knowledge has often been poured out, like water, upon the public mind; and so far occupied the time and attention of the community, as nearly to prevent all thorough research and deep investigation. Too much of this quackery in education, this literary empiricism has found its way into our country; perhaps, by a perversion of the very genius of our free institutions, producing a sickly literature, and endangering the very foundations of these institutions themselves. appropriate remedy, then, be speedily applied; let all such temporary expedients give place to those which furnish higher and better motives to effort, and produce more persevering industry, and untiring application to study.

This suggestion brings us back again to the question, involving the principal subject of this discourse: What means will best call forth and discipline the active powers of the young mind; form, strengthen and beautify the intellect, and furnish it with knowledge, enduring and worth possessing? and what will accomplish all this, with the least encroachment on the province of moral and physical education? other words, what measures should be employed, and what motives presented to the minds of children and youth, to incite them to effort, and induce them to study the best things in the best manner; to make the highest intellectual attainments which can be made. consistently with the most perfect development of their physical energies, and the formation of the highest moral and Christian character?

I In answer to this general inquiry, I remark, that motives drawn from a sense of duty, and expedients calculated to awaken and cherish the moral sense, and to excite these motives, should unquestionably occupy a prominent place, in every system of education. As soon as the little child is capable of feeling the force of moral obligation, he should be taught, that it is his duty to improve the powers which God has given him, to occupy the time allotted him, and to cultivate the talents committed to his trust. Indeed, this consideration should be urged upon him, in every stage of his pupilage. I may add, it should be cherished by us all, through life; and become an incentive to self-education for eternity, for heaven.

By resorting to such means and appealing to such motives, in order to stimulate to study, we may indirectly promote the objects of moral education, as well as those which are peculiarly intellectual. For the very exercise of moral principle and the cherishing of religious motives, though for a different purpose, cannot fail to elevate and establish moral and religious character.

To the adoption of expedients of this character, however, it may be said by way of objection, that motives of duty cannot be excited, till children feel their relation to God, and their accountability to Him whose will lays the foundation of all moral obligation. We answer, that the relation may be felt, as soon as its influence is needed; as soon as the capacity for intellectual improvement begins to be developed. For reason and conscience are coincident powers, and contemporaneous in their origin.

It may be objected further, that many, even among those who are early taught to know God, still do not acknowledge him as God, do not reverence his authority nor regard his will. The fact, must, indeed, be admitted; and it is greatly to be lamented, that many, during the whole course of their pupilage, give no evidence of their possessing religious principle. But defective as moral education has hitherto been. and depraved as the natural heart is, few only, as we hope and have reason to believe, especially among the young, have so seared their consciences, and darkened their understandings by the practice of iniquity, as to have lost all sense of right and wrong, and all apprehensions of "a judgment to come." But however this may be—though some, during the period of pupilage and minority even, may have been given over to a reprobate mind, may have become "past feeling," may have lost all moral sensibility; and though many more may not yet have been renewed in the spirit of their minds, and brought under the influence of supreme love to God and habitual obedience to his will; the position we have taken, can nevertheless be fully sustained. Religious motives, and expedients and considerations calculated to suggest such motives, should therefore hold a distinguished place, among the means of urging the young to study and effort for intellectual improvement. For where religious principles, and a sense of moral obligation exist, these motives are the most efficient of any which can be addressed to the human mind; at least, they are the most steady and uniform in their operation, and, of course, produce the greatest strength of character and the most untiring efforts.

Besides, these are the only motives, whose influence is always salutary, whose effects are uniformly good; which, in their operation, are liable neither to excess All others are more or less impernor to perversion. fect in their character, or uncertain in their operations and results. Some exert a directly pernicious influence, either on the physical energies or the moral character; while others occasionally produce these injurious effects by their perversion or excessive action. is the direct tendency of some of these motives, while they stimulate to mental effort, to counteract all the means of moral improvement, and undermine all moral principle. Others act unequally. peculiarly liable to abuse. They occasionally blind the moral judgment and usurp the authority of conscience. They not unfrequently incite to excessive effort, and thus break down the constitution, and completely defeat the provisions of nature and the contrivances of art, to preserve health and develop the physical energies.

But the influence of moral and religious principle on mental effort and intellectual improvement, is good and only good continually. It prompts to action, where prompting is needed; and it restrains, where restraint is necessary. It produces efforts, corresponding with strength and in accordance with a conscientious regard to the preservation of life, health and that vigor of constitution, which is necessary for the discharge of the various duties of life. It likewise so controls and directs these efforts, as never to interfere with the rights of others, with the claims of justice and benevolence, piety and virtue; as to cherish all the innocent sympathies of human nature, the best affections of the heart, the holiest desires of the soul. sanctifies all the intellectual acquisitions, which it makes. Thus, while it elevates and enlarges the mind, it purifies the heart; while it makes a man great, it makes him good. It prepares him alike for usefulness in this life, and for blessedness hereafter.

So salutary is this principle in all its operations, and so safe are the expedients which appeal to it, that it might seem unnecessary, in forming and executing the most perfect plan of education, to suggest any other motives but those of duty, or employ any other means but those which are adapted to rouse this pure principle, and furnish these high and holy motives. Truly, any other resort would be not only unnecessary, but pernicious, if this principle existed in all minds, and was always perfect, where it has existence. since some are entirely destitute of it.; since it is exceedingly feeble in others; since it is far, very far from perfection in all; at least, in all who are in a course of intellectual training, other motives must often be suggested, and other expedients resorted to, in order to rouse the energies of the mind, fix the attention, and secure perseverance and industry in study.

II. I remark, therefore, in answer to the great in-

quiry before us, that for the purpose of inciting to study. appeal should be made to curiosity, or that innate love of knowledge, which is found in every human breast. I give this principle the second place in point of order and importance, not merely because it is universal and powerful, but chiefly because appeals to it are gene-It is not very liable to perversion; and, even when it is perverted, it does not, like many other perverted principles, necessarily and directly produce moral evil. Its perversions merely diminish its own beneficial effects. It does, indeed, sometimes divide the attention, and thus prevent the highest intellectual culture, which might otherwise be secured. And it occasionally excites to over-action and excessive study. and thus diminishes the physical energies. But, in its grossest abuses, it still has no direct bearing, or pernicious influence, on moral character and religious principle.

Since, however, it is a universal principle of human nature, regard to it, in a general plan of education, becomes peculiarly proper and important. Those who possess no religious principle, and pay no regard to the claims of duty, are sometimes successfully roused, and incited to study and intellectual effort, by judicious appeals to this innate love of knowledge. And it not unfrequently comes to the aid of moral motives and religious principle, and thus adds greatness to goodness, pushing the virtuous student forward, or rather alluring him, to higher attainments in useful knowl-Whatever expedients, therefore, throw a charm around the objects of study, awaken curiosity, and interest the feelings of the student, may be considered as wise contrivances and efficient means for promoting the cause of intellectual education.

Here, indeed, a little chastened enthusiasm may be

safely cherished; such, for example, as that which characterizes many of the ardent scholars of Germany; such as that, which animates and pushes forward every successful student, of sanguine temperament and inventive genius; such as that which led an ancient philosopher, upon the discovery of a long sought truth, to exclaim, with rapture, Eugna ! Eugna !

The only danger on this subject is, that, in attempting to render study attractive, we should render it too easy; and thus defeat the first object of education, and lose all the benefit of mental discipline. business of the student must not be made mere children's play. Difficulties must be left, for the inquisitive mind to overcome, or it will lose all elasticity Curiosity must not be too readily and and energy. too easily gratified lest it cease to be wakeful. facilities for acquiring knowledge may be so multiplied, and brought so completely within the reach of an indolent mind, that it may never feel the necessity of putting forth its active powers. It may remain passive, as the polished mirror, which reflects the images, thrown upon its surface, without being itself moved by them; and the knowledge, which is thus poured upon it, though abundant as the waters of the mountain-torrent, will, like them, soon pass away, and leave it an empty channel or a parched heath.

In introducing variety of study and furnishing facilities to aid in the acquisition of knowledge, therefore, caution and judgment seem to be peculiarly requisite. But the only general rule, on the subject, which occurs to my mind, is that there should be as much variety introduced in the matter of study, as is consistent with unity of plan and symmetry of intellectual development; and as much interest excited by the manner of giving instruction, and as many facilities

farnished to the student, as is consistent with leaving him under the necessity of effort and energetic application. For example, instruction by lectures, and study with text-books, should be so judiciously intermingled and so duly proportioned, as on the one hand to awaken curiosity and arrest attention; and on the other, to withhold gratification, till all the energies of the mind are concentrated, and every intellectual muscle brought into action.

III. Instinctive love of happiness, I remark again, may be made the foundation of a class of efficient motives, to produce steady and persevering application to study. The position, that "knowledge is power," has long since passed into a maxim; but it is no less true, that knowledge is happiness, or the immediate cause of happiness. Other circumstances being equal, acquisition of knowledge and intellectual culture, by increasing the sources and susceptibilities of enjoyment, must necessarily, unless perverted and abused, increase the sum of happiness on earth, as well as lead to higher felicity in heaven.

Arguments drawn from this source may, therefore, be addressed to the youthful mind, with great effect. Motives of self-love are, indeed, inferior to those of benevolence, and those which spring from a direct regard to the will and glory of God; but they are not inconsistent, nor in the least degree at variance, with them. For self-love be it remembered, is not selfishness, where it does not lead us to disregard the claims, nor neglect the duties of justice and charity. The desire and the pursuit of our own happiness need not interfere with the happiness of others; and where they do not, they furnish a legitimate principle of action. Self-love, as an instinct, is as innocent, as that native sympathy, upon which true benevolence is

ingrafted. It is the origin of sin and the fruitful cause of misery, only when it degenerates into selfishness, and becomes exclusive in its operations.

Expedients and considerations, therefore, which prompt the pupil to study, and urge him to diligence and perseverance, with a view to future eminence as a scholar, and future dignity and happiness as a man, as a moral and intellectual being, capable of endless improvement and ever-growing felicity, may surely be employed, without interfering with the claims of benevolence or with the will of a benevolent Creator. And such means may be made available; if not with children, at least with every ingenuous youth; if not, as strong stimulants, yet as steady, uniform, and constantly increasing incitements to persevering effort.

IV. I remark, further, that propensity to imitation is another original principle of human nature, which may be enlisted in the cause of learning. Models of excellence in scholarship, and examples of industry and success in study, may be brought before the minds of youth and even of children, as objects of imitation; and, by judicious exhortation and encouragement, they may be induced to follow those who have ascended the hill of science before them, and aspire after their high attainments and imperishable renown. The direct influence of personal intercourse, however, furnishes opportunity for the most powerful appeals to this instinctive principle.

"Example," it has been said, "is a living law." It acts steadily. It operates silently. Its influence is gradual and unperceived, and therefore irresistible. True, it is sometimes pernicious; because evil, as well as good, may constitute the object of imitation. But this pernicious influence is rarely felt in intellectual pursuits. Though a corrupt heart may lead to the

imitation of vice; there is nothing, even in depraved nature, to superinduce a love of ignorance and stupidity; and dispose even the thoughtless youth to imitate "the blockhead," or to wish to be like "the graduated Such cases may indeed exist. I think I have sometimes seen them. But they are rare and unnatural, like those extraordinary perversions of instinct, where natural affection is eradicated, and men are brought to hate their nearest relatives, and even their "own flesh." Like these, they are instances of recklessness and desperation, of insanity and self-im-But generally, almost universally, indeed, example in literary and scientific pursuits, exerts a favorable and sometimes a most powerful influence. Mind acts on mind, as nothing else can act; and produces beneficial effects, which nothing can produce on the solitary student, on the cloistered pupil, on the isolated mind.

Hence the great advantage of public over private education. Hence the indispensable necessity of public schools and seminaries of learning, notwithstanding all their imperfections, and even dangers to the unsettled principles and unstable characters of the young. And hence the importance not only, of bringing before the minds of youth, through the medium of history and biography, the great models of ancient scholarship and learning; but of placing them in contact, and leading them to associate, as far as practicable, with the best scholars, the most ardent students, and the most learned and accomplished men of their own time.

V. Our next remark is, that love of praise, a desire of approbation, a wish to please, is another constitutional principle of our nature, to which appeal may and should be frequently made, to secure the high

objects of education. Combined with what are called the natural affections, this instinct sometimes becomes a powerful principle, both to propel to that which is good, and restrain from that which is evil. It operates with peculiar force in the early part of life; and a child or a young man can sometimes be roused to studious effort, by appeals made to it, when everything else has failed to reach his heart. The kind, yet commanding tones of a father's voice, or the flowing tears and imploring expressions of a mother's countenance, have often melted the hard heart, roused the stupid mind and reclaimed, from his idle wanderings, the apparently lost son. Even the image of an absent, perhaps deceased, and much loved parent, brought before the youthful imagination, with all the interesting associations connected with it, can hardly fail to touch any heart however hard, and move any mind however stupid and indolent. Often have I seen the blessed effects of a resort to this expedient, after other means had been used in vain. Often have I found it operating, like a charm, on the apparently seared conscience and stupid mind: melting the obdurate heart. and calling back the erring youth to his books; to the exercise of reason and self-respect; and finally to habits of industry, to virtue, to happiness, to God.

It is true, the love of approbation is a principle of human nature, peculiarly liable to perversion; and, when perverted, peculiarly disastrous in its consequences. When by vicious associations, it comes to look for gratification, to the vain and wicked, it sinks into false honor, and leads directly to crime. When, too, it is unduly cherished and pampered by flattery, it may become an unnatural passion, an insatiable appetite. It may lead us, if unrestrained, to prefer the praise of man to that honor, which cometh from God.

Like self-love degenerated to selfishness, or sympathy sunk into weakness and cruel indulgence, it may draw us away from the path of duty; and produce effects at variance with its original design, and fatal to character and happiness.

But ordinarily, and within proper limits, the love of approbation is a principle highly salutary in its operations, perfectly coincident with the principles of virtue and generally subservient to its cause. Hence, it is directly recognized and fully sanctioned in the Scriptures: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest whatsoever things are just whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of these things." It is, therefore, a principle to which appeal may, and should often be made, in the course of education; and, if judiciously made, it cannot fail to encourage the "unspoiled child" and the ingenuous youth, to increasing diligence in study, and persevering efforts for improvement. Even the desire of posthumous fame may be made subservient to the same happy results.

VI. I remark once more, that appeals are sometimes made to the *fears* and *hopes* of pupils, to induce them to apply their minds to study. Their lessons are imposed upon them, as a task; and the performance of this task is enforced by direct rewards and punishments. The question, however, has recently been much agitated, whether mental effort and intellectual improvement are promoted by these means; and whether such appeals ought ever to be made, with a view and for the purpose of urging indolent youth to study?

There can be no doubt, that for the purposes of government and the preservation of order in families, in schools and higher seminaries of learning, such appeals must sometimes be made; and in cases of peculiar obstinacy and perverseness, whether natural or superinduced by previous mismanagement, rewards and punishments must be employed. Indeed, where this perverseness exists, there can be no such thing as government or order, without resort to this class of sanctions. Depraved as human nature is, and prevalent as vice and iniquity are in the world, laws would be vain and authority impotent without this resort; nor could the forms of society be maintained, or society itself exist for a single day. The divine government, as illustrated in the course of providence and expressly announced in the inspired word, furnishes conclusive evidence on this subject, and presents a perfect model for our imitation.

Still, the question returns upon us, Whether rewards and punishments can be employed with beneficial effect, for the purpose of stimulating to study children and youth, who are yet under parental authority, or under tutors and instructors to whom a portion of this authority is delegated? In answer to the question, in this form, the observation, already made in substance. may be repeated; that, where there is no peculiar defect in temperament and original organization, and where there has been no great mistake or neglect in previous management, a resort to this expedient seems to me, to be altogether unnecessary; never beneficial and often exceedingly pernicious. one, or more, of the motives already mentioned in this discourse, may be made to reach, and to reach effectually, every unperverted and ingenuous mind of child or youth. In extraordinary cases, in consequence of some peculiar disposition or previous mismanagement, rewards and punishments may have become

necessary. But even in these cases, they are needed principally for purposes of government, for moral effect. For intellectual purposes, their influence is still questionable; it is still doubtful, whether they produce more vigorous application to study, and higher attainments in knowledge.

My own experience and observation are altogether against making use of any of this class of expedients. To make scholars. I would excite neither the fear of punishment nor the hope of reward; I would employ neither "the sugar-plum nor the rod;" above all, I would never appeal to motives of servile fear. of the preceding considerations can induce a child or youth, to apply himself to study and make intellectual improvement, he had better be taken from seminaries of learning, and put into the work-shop or field, or some other school of mere physical education. he has not ingenuousness of mind, sufficient to be moved by any or all of the motives which these various considerations suggest, he cannot be made a scholar; and he had better be put to such employments, and under such restraints, as will prevent his destroying himself or becoming a nuisance in society.

VII. We come now to the last topic, which I shall introduce, connected with the subject of this lecture, the influence of *emulation*; and to the question, Whether in forming a plan of education and conducting the education of children and youth, it is proper to adopt expedients, and resort to measures, which appeal to this principle of action?

This, in my apprehension, is a question of momentous interest. It demands the serious consideration of parents and instructors; indeed, of all who are called to exercise a supervision over schools, or who have any agency in forming the character of the rising gen-

eration. Perhaps, no motives to induce to study have been so extensively, so generally, I was about to say, so universally set before the minds of children and youth for this purpose, as those which are drawn from this source, this "low ambition." It is time, therefore, that the subject should be thoroughly examined; and if it can be shown, that the effect of this practice is, on the whole, bad; or that the evil which it produces, overbalances the good, then all measures and expedients, having this bearing, should be abandoned immediately, entirely and forever.

To obtain a definite view of the question, and be able to feel the force of the arguments, which have a bearing on its decision, it is necessary to define the term emulation, and distinguish the principle denoted by it, from the love of praise, the desire of fame, or simple ambition; with which it is often confounded. Emulation is simply a desire to excel some particular person or persons, with whom we compare ourselves; and, of course, with whom there is a direct competition; a strife for the mastery; a contest for preëminence. Hence if one gains the object of desire, by the action of this principle, his rival must lose it, in consequence of his success.

While, therefore, emulation tends to excite and cherish feelings of exclusive selfishness, and form a warlike character; it directly counteracts the mild, peaceable and benevolent spirit of the gospel. It may accord with a false political religion, and minister to party strife and deadly animosity; but it is directly opposed to the great design and to all the purifying tendencies of Christianity. It was, indeed, the leading principle of ancient paganism; and a view of its legitimate operations seems to have led Hobbs to pronounce the "natural state of man a state of war."

In the Isthmian games, for example, those schools for the formation of Grecian character, appeals were made exclusively to emulation, as if it were the only active principle of human nature. Thus to stimulate in the race, the considerations which were to determine the question of approbation and applause, were not who should run a given distance in a given time; but who should outstrip all rivals, and first reach the goal. Of course, whatever retarded the progress of one competitor, secured the object of his rival, as effectually, as that which gave to the latter rapidity of This simple example completely illustrates the subject; and shows fully the moral nature and tendency of emulation. But love of praise, a desire of fame, simple ambition, though, as we have seen, liable to abuse, and often connected with emulation itself, does not necessarily interfere with the claims of others, nor counteract the great principles of iustice and charity.

Emulation and ambition, as already intimated, are often confounded with each other; and perhaps, the former always includes the latter. But the converse of this proposition is not true. Ambition does not necessarily imply emulation. It denotes a desire of attainment, of elevation; but it does not necessarily involve comparison with a rival. Of course, it does not necessarily produce strife for the mastery; nor does its success depend, at all, on the failure of others. In this race, if I may borrow a metaphor from the apostle to the Gentiles, all who run well, obtain the prize; success depends on positive merit, and not on comparison. But in the race of emulation, the success of one is always and necessarily connected with the failure of another; or as Shakspeare expresses it:

Honor travels in a strait so narrow;
Where one but'goes abreast: keep then the path.
For emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue: If you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forth right,
Like to an entered tide, they all rush by,
And leave you hindmost;
Or like a gallant horse, fallen in first rank,
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,
O'er run and trampled on.

It would seem, then, that there may be such a thing as a laudable ambition; an ambition to do good, to possess high qualifications for high purposes, to accomplish the best objects in the best manner. It is indeed, a desire of personal excellence and lofty attainments; but it inflicts no injury on others. It may even act in harmony with the most disinterested benevolence. But can the same thing be said of emulation? Can the epithets, laudable and benevolent be applied to a desire, which cannot be gratified but by contest with a rival and triumph over him; a desire, which may be as much gratified by his stumbling and falling, as by our own positive advancement.

The question before us, then, is simply this: Should appeals be made to the principle of emulation, to induce children and youth to study? and should expedients, in a system of education, be adopted, which are calculated to furnish motives and excite a spirit of emulation? For example, should one child be placed above another in his class, because he has succeeded in spelling a word, which his fellow had failed to spell? I put this simple case, and make the illustration in this simple form, because this very expedient has been extensively employed in our primary schools; and because, in principle, it covers the whole ground of the controversy.

On the affirmative of this question, it has been said, that in consequence of such appeals to the principle of emulation, many children and youth have applied themselves to study, with great diligence and energy; that some, who might not have been reached and moved by any other consideration, have under the influence of motives, resulting from these appeals, become distinguished scholars, and eminent men; that some, who had been stimulated and urged forward by appeals to this principle, through the whole course of their education, and to appearance had been governed principally or entirely by it, have nevertheless made high attainments in science and literature; and finally, becoming Christians, have devoted all their talents and acquisitions to the cause of truth and virtue, piety and benevolence; to the service of their country and their God.

On the other hand, it has been contended, notwithstanding these benefits, that the cause of truth and human happiness has, on the whole, suffered by these appeals to emulation; that more children and youth have been injured than benefited by them; that many, being outstripped by their competitors in the race of emulation, have been mortified and discouraged, become envious and misanthropic, and finally sunk into a state of indolence and despair: that others, under the fitful excitement of rivalry, have studied principally for purposes of display; and thus formed habits of superficial investigation, and made none but superficial attainments; that others still have been overcome by vanity, and ruined by success; that, finally, the moral effects of emulation are always bad: cherishing a spirit of pride on the one hand, and of envy on the other; wherever it exists, sinking the standard of moral excellence, and often proving fatal to benevolent feeling and Christian character. It is a debasing principle; in the language of Cowper:

A principle, whose proud pretensions pass
Unquestioned, though the jewel be but glass;
That with a world, not over nice,
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice;
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,
Of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride—
Centributes most, perhaps, to enhance their fame,
And Emulation is its specious name:—

The spirit of that competition burns,
With all varieties of ill by turns;
Each vainly magnifies his own success,
Resents his fellow's, wishes it were less,
Exults in his miscarriage, if he fail;
Deems his reward too great, if he prevail;
And labors to surpass him, day and night,
Less for improvement, than to tickle spite.

Weigh for a moment classical desert,
Against a heart deprayed, a temper hurt;
And you are staunch, indeed, in learning's cause,
If you can crown a discipline that draws
Such mischiefs after it, with much applause.

For myself, after much experience in the business of education, and a careful observation of the effects of appeals to this principle, I have been led to doubt, whether they ever produce beneficial effects, which might not be produced by other and better means.

I make this declaration of my opinion, however, with diffidence; because the universal practice and almost universal sentiments of mankind are against me. Still I make it, with no inconsiderable degree of confidence; because it is sustained by long experience and careful observation; because too, it seems to me to harmonize with the declarations of Scripture and the spirit of Christianity; and especially, because I am

persuaded, that the prevalence of this spirit of the gospel, will ultimately correct the present predominant sentiments on the subject of emulation; or rather, I should say, that the change of the prevailing opinion must be coincident with the change of the general practice; and that the spirit of emulation must subside, as the spirit of the gospel prevails and its influence is felt. Yes, when wars shall cease, when pride shall be subdued, when vanity shall have been blown away; when love, heavenly love, Christian charity, shall have diffused its influence through the earth, emulation, with its attendants, envy and strife, will be found no more.

Even now, it seems to me, appeals to emulation for the purposes of education, are altogether unnecessary, and should be entirely discarded. Might not some of the legitimate motives, brought to view in this lecture, be made to reach every mind worth cultivating, every child and youth not already spoiled? And I ask again, if the moral effects of emulation are always bad, and often ruinous, can any supposed benefit, which may occasionally result from it, compensate for the moral injury, the frequent blighting of hopes and ruin of character, the everlasting destruction, it may be, of the immortal soul?

Let parents, instructors, and all who have any agency in the education of children and youth, consider these things, and act in accordance with the decisions of a sound judgment and the dictates of heavenly wisdom. Let none resort to temporary and worldly policy, to a short-sighted and mere selfish expediency. If emulation, as defined in this lecture, is ranked by an inspired apostle with "the works of the flesh," in opposition to "the works of the Spirit," the spirit of holiness, the spirit of life and love and felicity, let us

not cherish it in ourselves, nor appeal to it in others. Let us not do evil, with the hope, that under the overruling providence of God, good may come. Let us act under the influence of none but hoby, at least none but innocent motives; and let us use no means, nor adopt any expedients, to awaken and cherish in others, and especially in the young, motives which we are compelled, by reason and conscience and the word of God, to condemn in ourselves.

In conclusion, I remark, that the subject under consideration, Intellectual Education, united with and modified by moral education, the education of the head and the heart, the discipline of the mind and the affections, is a subject of paramount importance, and one which demands the highest attention of parents and teachers, of legislators and philosophers, of patriots and Christians.

On education, properly conducted, individual character and happiness essentially depend; and on its proper regulation and extended influence, depends, in no small degree, the continued existence of our civil and social institutions; the peace, prosperity and liberty of our country. For knowledge and virtue, closely combined and extensively diffused, constitute the great conservative principle of republican government and free institutions; of social order, civil liberty and personal security. If either of these is wanting, liberty and order cannot exist. Knowledge, without moral principle, degenerates into cunning and intrigue, "puffeth up" with pride, and leads to despotism; and on the other hand, religion, without knowledge, begets a false zeal and sinks into fanaticism, becomes the victim of delusion, and terminates in anarchy and misrule.

The highest interest of our country, therefore, as

well as the personal happiness of our children, is connected with the manner in which we treat this subject. I wish I could make my voice to be heard, and these sentiments to be felt, by every Christian and every patriot throughout the length and breadth of this land. I would warn every man against the danger of neglecting the duties, which the subject imposes. I would exhort every man and every woman, every father and every mother, every guardian and teacher, every one who has influence over the children and youth of our country, to see, that they are duly educated, furnished with useful knowledge, and trained to active virtue, educated for the service of their country and their God: so educated as, with the blessing of Heaven, to be qualified for the high duties and lofty privileges of freemen and Christians.

## LECTURE XXIII.

## GRATITUDE FOR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS.\*

#### EPHESIANS I. 3.

Blessed be the god and father of our lord jesus christ, who hate blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in christ.

This ejaculation of the apostle involves a sentiment and expresses feelings, common to all the redeemed Spiritual blessings, in the language of the among men. sacred Scriptures, is a phrase of extensive import, denoting everything pertaining to the renewal and sanctification of our immortal spirits; expressing the full economy of redemption by Jesus Christ; comprehending the whole system of means, instruments and operations, by which the grace of God is bestowed on fallen man, in procuring his pardon, leading him to repentance, and preparing him for the enjoyment of everlasting happiness. Among these are the inspired word, the ministry of reconciliation, the ordinances of the gospel and the common and special influences of the Holy Spirit. By the phrase, heavenly places, as Macknight well observes, may be understood the Christian church, which our Lord himself denominated "the kingdom of heaven;" and which the prophet Daniel described

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse, originally delivered at Dedham, on a "Day of Thanksgiving;" was subsequently, with some modifications, delivered at a Missionary meeting in the city of New York.

in similar language, as a kingdom, which the God of heaven would set up, and which should never be destroyed.

The sentiment involved in the text, therefore, is simply this, that the blessings and privileges bestowed upon the Christian church, are of infinite value to mankind, displaying the glorious harmony of the divine attributes, manifesting the unbounded riches of divine grace, and securing to them that believe, pardon, sanctification and eternal life. And the feelings expressed in the text, are consistent with the sentiment which it involves; they are feelings of lively gratitude for redeeming love, holy confidence in the Redeemer and unreserved devotion to the Author of salvation.

The observations which I have to offer on this subject, will of course be addressed principally to those, who are already Christians, Christians in heart, Christians in experience and practice; to those, who have received the truth in the love of it, and whom the truth has in some measure sanctified. Not that others are free from the obligation of blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. are all under this obligation; for we have all been more or less blessed with spiritual blessings in Christ. He died for us all. 'The invitations of the gospel are extended to us all. The means of grace are furnished for us all. The common influences of the Spirit reach the hearts of us all. Yes: all, who will, may come and partake of the waters of life freely. All, indeed, even those who are not yet influenced by Christian principles, are nevertheless, as members of society, essentially benefitted by the general prevalence of Christianity. They are benefitted by the elevated standard which it furnishes for public morals; by the stability which it gives to civil institutions; by the spirit of

peace and love which it diffuses among the members of the community; by the protection which it affords to life, to property, to reputation, to everything valuable in personal liberty, and just and equal in national compact.

But the observations which I have to offer on the subject of this discourse, will be addressed principally to Christians; because others do not feel and will not acknowledge their force. We should in vain attempt to excite sentiments of gratitude for the grace of God. in the minds of those who have never tasted and seen that he is gracious. We should in vain call upon men, to "bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" for "spiritual blessings;" till, under the influence of these blessings, their hearts have been softened and We should in vain talk of retheir wills subdued. deeming love to those, who reject the Redeemer, deny the Lord who bought them, tread under foot the Son of God, and do despite to the Spirit of grace. We might, indeed, as well expect that the stones in the street would break forth into songs of praise and hallelujahs to the Lord, as that one expression of pious gratitude would flow from the hard heart of an unbeliever; of him, who has never cordially embraced the Saviour, felt the power of his grace, and viewed him as "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely."

But I shall not speak in vain, if with the blessing of Heaven I should say something on redeeming love, calculated to stir up the pure minds of Christians, awaken their pions sensibility, and excite them to the performance of those acts of devotion and charity, which are always acceptable sacrifices unto God.

Listen, then, my brethren, while I endeavor to remind you of the spiritual blessings, with which you are blessed in heavenly places in Christ.

L View your spiritual blessings, as they are exhibited generally; in the glorious plan of redemption; in the merciful provision, made for the salvation of sin-"It is," says an inspired apostle, "a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He came to save them by procuring their pardon and justification; by rendering it consistent with the justice of God, the honor of his law and the stability of his government. to forgive iniquity and regard the penitent sinner, as though he had never transgressed. Accordingly we are told, that, "when we were without strength," unable to save ourselves, incapable of making atonement for our sins, under sentence of condemnation. exposed to the curse of a violated law, ready to receive the wages of sin and suffer the natural consequences of iniquity; that when we were thus without strength, "in due time Christ died for the ungodlv." Yes. "he was wounded for our transcression, he was bruised for our iniquities;" "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Yes, he was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" whom God in the fulness of time "sent forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare his righteousness, I say, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

He came to save sinners, I remark again, by reconciling them to God. According to the infallible decision of an inspired apostle, "the carnal mind is enmity against God." All who are carnally minded; all impenitent sinners, therefore, are his enemies; in a state of complete rebellion and positive enmity. To destroy this enmity of the natural heart and reconcile

rebellious man to his holy Sovereign, the Son of God came, as an ambassador from the court of Heaven. Thus saith our apostle: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God in Christ was reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Thus too a holy man of old was moved by the Holy Ghost, to predict the time appointed for the advent of the Messiah; "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness."

He came to save sinners, I remark further, by enlightening their minds, sanctifying their hearts, and raising them from moral and spiritual death to newness of life. Here indeed, we have at one view the substance of all spiritual blessings in Christ; the restoration of fallen man to his primitive state, his renovation after the image of God, in which he was originally made; his new creation in righteousness and true holiness; his preparation for the society and enjoyments of heaven, for intercourse with angels and communion with God, for glory, honor and immortal felicity. This was the great and benevolent object. for which the Son of God bowed the heavens and came down. For this he left the bosom of the Father, took upon him human nature, and went about doing good, setting us an example of active benevo-For this he became a man of sorrow and endured the contradiction of sinners, teaching us to be meek, and patient and submissive. For this he gave us precept upon precept and line upon line, pointing out unto us the way of life. For this he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; entering once for all into the holy of holies, and making a

sacrifice of himself for sin. For this, when he ascended on high, he sent down the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, giving gifts unto men, appointing ordinances for the church, and establishing a ministry of reconciliation. For this, in a word, he labored and suffered and died, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; that he might open the eyes of our understandings, and give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; that he might destroy the body of sin in us, and deliver us from the power of Satan and the condemnation of death; that he might finally make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Christians, view your spiritual blessings, thus exhibited in the general redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; in the merciful provision, which has been made for the pardon, reconciliation, sanctification and complete redemption of sinners. Consider the dignity of the Redeemer, the unworthiness of the redeemed and the magnitude of the redemption; and then say, are you not under infinite obligations to unite with the apostle, in "blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

II. View your spiritual blessings in the peculiar advantages, afforded in this age and country, for profiting by the gracious provision, which has been made for the salvation of sinners. Consider your advantages over the ancient church, under the Jewish dispensation. It is true, that Christ was promised, as the "seed of the woman," as the Messiah, as the Saviour of the world, from the beginning. Being the Lamb of

God; slain according to the counsels of Heaven, from the foundation of the world, he was indeed an efficacious Saviour, to all who looked for him as "the consolation of Israel." Thus, he said to the Jews: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." Thus Job, possessing strong faith and confident hope, was enabled to say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Thus many of the fathers embraced the promises, obtained consolation, died in faith, and have long since gone to enjoy the rest prepared for the children of God.

Still, however, their advantages for spiritual improvement and divine consolation were far inferior to those enjoyed under the Christian dispensation. They saw Christ's day; but their vision was obscured, by the distance of the prospect, and the clouds which intervened. We see it, since the prophecies have been fulfilled, immediately before our eyes, without an intervening cloud. They beheld the light of the Sun of righteousness; but it was only the dawning of that light; a few scattered rays, reflected from a morning cloud, long before his rising. We behold this light in its meridian splendor; and by it we may clearly discover the path of duty, and joyfully walk in the way of safety. Hence our Lord declared concerning John. his forerunner, the last and greatest prophet under the Jewish dispensation, that the least in the kingdom of heaven or the Christian church, was greater than he. "Blessed, therefore, are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired

to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

Consider, likewise, your advantages over many in the primitive ages of Christianity. Before the art of printing was discovered, it required so much labor to transcribe the Bible, that very few were able to procure a copy of it, for themselves and families. The great majority of Christians, therefore, were obliged to depend, for a knowledge of its contents, solely on the public reading of it, in their religious assemblies. But now this repository of religious truth, this treasure of heavenly wisdom, is within the reach of almost every man, however poor. Yes, we have the Bible in our hands, translated into our own language; and may read for our own edification in our closets and our families.

Consider not only the peculiar advantages of the age. but those likewise of the country in which we live. We are subject to the arbitrary authority of no ecclesiastical establishment. We enjoy Christian liberty in the highest degree. Our pious ancestors, the first settlers of this country, paid early and strict attention to provision for literary and religious institutions. These have been carefully cherished and liberally supported by many of their descendants; so that at the present period, notwithstanding our deficiences; notwithstanding many of our new settlements are destitute of churches and schools, and many of our churches without pastors and teachers, there is perhaps no part of the world, where the means of religious knowledge and spiritual improvement, are more abundantly furnished to all classes of society, than in a great portion of our beloved country.

Consider these things and contrast your condition

with heathen lands; and then say, are not we, who live in these latter days, and in this highly favored land, under peculiar obligations, to adopt the language of our text, and "bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?"

III. View your personal spiritual blessings, in the efficacious operations of the Holy Spirit on your hearts: in those divine influences, which have accompanied the means of religious instruction, and led you to embrace the Saviour, and thus regard the provision, made Without this blessing of for the salvation of sinners. Heaven, all others would have been granted you in It would have been in vain for you, that God has sent his Son into the world, that Christ has died, that the gospel has been published, that you were born and educated in a Christian country and in a land of liberty; if after all, the Spirit of God had never striven directly with your spirits; if after all, you had been left to reject the Saviour, to harden your hearts against instruction, and continue to walk carelessly in the way of transgressors, in the path of iniquity, in the broad road. which leadeth to destruction. If you are indeed Christians, if you have received the truth in the love of it, if your hearts have been renewed, and filled with joy in believing; it is, because the energies of the Holy Spirit have accompanied parental instruction or the preached word. It is, because God has wrought in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and thus encouraged you to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "Where then is boasting?" "Who maketh one to differ from another?" "We are." savs our apostle, "his workmanship, created anew unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them."

Christians, you are not your own; you are bought with a price; your salvation is of the Lord; you have reason, therefore, to adopt the humble and grateful language of the Psalmist: "Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto thy name give all the glory." Yes, you have reason to adopt the strong and expressive language of the apostle, in our text and the verses succeeding: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according, as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

Our subject admits of a direct and personal application. Do any ask, then, how we may bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, how we may express our gratitude to him for spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ? We answer, this may be done by solemn acts of thanksgiving and praise, by lives of holy obedience, by zealous and persevering endeavors to extend the influence of the gospel and to impart these blessings to others.

1. Christians may bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by solemn acts of thanksgiving and praise. They cannot indeed render unto the Lord according to his benefits, nor express in adequate terms the sentiments, which ought to warm their hearts and elevate their affections. Language will be wanting fully to express the feelings of a redeemed sinner; till

he shall have acquired new powers of utterance; till he shall have learned that new song, which is sung only in heaven; till he shall have entered the regions of unclouded light and perfect love, and joined the holy throng of the redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue. But although a Christian cannot express all that he feels in his most devout moments, nor always feel all that redeeming love requires of him; vet he may render unto the Lord an acceptable sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise. "Wherefore, bless the Lord, all ve his saints, and praise him, all ve people." Praise him in your closets. Praise him in your families. Praise him in the sanctuary. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. Come before his presence with singing; and call upon your souls and all within you, to bless his holy name.

2. Christians may bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for spiritual blessings in him; may manifest their gratitude for redeeming love, by lives of holy obedience. They cannot, indeed, return an equivalent for the unspeakable gifts bestowed upon them. They cannot be profitable unto God, as a man that is wise may be profitable unto himself. They can do no more, than their duty. They will still be obliged to acknowledge, that they are debtors to redeeming grace, "unprofitable servants." But by obedience, submission and holy conversation, they may at least show, that they are the willing aud grateful subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Christians, remember that you were redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ; wherefore glorify God with your bodies and spirits, which are his. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths.

Defile not your bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost. Regulate your whole deportment according to the precepts of the gospel. Walk worthy of the vocation, wherewith you are called. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Thus let your light shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven.

3. Christians may express their gratitude to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for their spiritual blessings, by their zealous and persevering endeavors to extend these blessings to others. They cannot, indeed, communicate grace to their weaker brethren, nor change the hearts of sinners. But they may exert that influence, and pursue those measures, which God will please to bless, and render effectual to the salvation of immortal souls. As parents, they may instruct their children, and by daily prayer seek for them the blessings promised to believers and their offspring, and thus bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As members of the church of Christ. they may watch over their Christian brethren in love. warning and exhorting them with fidelity and tenderness. As neighbors and associates in the community in which they live, they may cast the whole weight of their example and authority into the scale of truth and righteousness. As members of the human family and citizens of the world, they may exercise a spirit of benevolence towards all mankind, opening the hand of charity to every object of compassion within the reach of their arm; speaking the language of consolation to every afflicted soul, within the compass of their voice: and doing good to all, as far as their influence In every situation in life, they may do something to promote the cause of Christ and the happiness of their fellow men. They may unite in prayer, they may meet in friendly council, they may jointly contribute of their property, for the encouragement of those efforts and the enlargement of those institutions, which are designed and calculated to promote the cause of Christian knowledge and Christian love.

By the united efforts of Christians in this country and in Europe, much has recently been done, to diffuse the light and spirit of Christianity through the world; and much fruit of this joint labor of love has already appeared; affording to the enlightened Christian an earnest of the promised glories of the "latter day;" when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth and all nations be gathered into the church of Christ; when, in the figurative language of prophecy, the wilderness shall blossom like the rose, the lamb lie down with the lion, and the leopard with the kid; when men shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the tops of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills. and all nations flow unto it for salvation.

But although much has thus been done to extend the knowledge of the Redeemer and the benign influences of Christianity in the world; still much more remains to be accomplished, before the glory of the millennium will be seen in all its beauty and splendor. Christians must be more generally and more effectually roused from their slumbers. Those who have begun to pray and act in the cause, must pray with more fervency and act with more energy; and those who have hitherto stood aloof from the work, must come forward "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." They must become willing and active instruments in his hand. They must contribute, cheer-

fully and liberally, of their wealth, their labors and their counsels, to send the gospel to the destitute, and to enlighten the dark places of the earth.

Christians, in view of what God has done for you, let me exhort you, to do what you can for your fellow men. Freely ve have received, freely give. Do any hesitate to come to the work, and aid the cause of Christian missions? Let me ask such, and let them ask themselves: 'Are you Christians? do you love the Redeemer? have you experienced the joy of the redeemed?' If you can answer these questions in the affirmative, you will not, you cannot remain unconcerned for those who are destitute of the gospel and "perishing for lack of vision." You cannot sit down with cold indifference, and fold your arms in selfish indolence, while thousands and tens of thousands of your fellow men, "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh," are living in darkness and dying without hope—destitute of spiritual light and the means of grace. No; I know you cannot. If you possess the benevolent spirit of Christ and "if any man have not his spirit, he is none of his;" if you possess any portion of that benevolent spirit, which brought the Redeemer from heaven to earth, and led him from the manger to the cross, you will feel, you will pray, you will do what you can, for the reformation and salvation of those who are made of the same "blood," and possess the same immortal nature with yourselves; and for whom, as well as for you, the Saviour labored and suffered and died.

Objections, I know, have been made, and are still made to this benevolent work of evangelizing the world, in all its branches and operations. But they are objections, either of ignorance, or infidelity, or avarice. Show me a man, who opposes this work; and

I will convince you, that one or more of these characteristics belong to him, and lie at the foundation of his It will invariably be found, that men opopposition. posed to the benevolent operations for "the propagation of the gospel," are either ignorant of the nature and design of these operations, or they have no established faith in the power and efficacy of the gospel, or they are under the influence of a sordid spirit, which hardens their hearts against the convictions of their understandings, or they are induced by the combined influence of all these causes, to "fight against God." Those, who truly believe and love the gospel, if they are acquainted with the wretched state of the heathen. or even of those who dwell in the waste places of Zion, deprived of the means of grace and the cheering hopes of salvation, will not, cannot object to this benevolent work.

The work of salvation, we admit and rejoice in the fact, is "the work of the Lord." But we remember, that he works by means; and he has designated the means by which the sinful children of men are to be converted, sanctified and saved: "After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Men, in order to be saved must be born again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God, and sanctified through the truth. To secure this blessed result, therefore, the gospel must be published in all the world; and "preached to every creature."

Be encouraged, then, my Christian friends, to go forward in the work, and set an example, which your fellow disciples may everywhere follow.

# LECTURE XXIV.

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AND THE SALVATION OF MEN.\*

### 1 CORINTHIANS L. SI.

FOR AFTER THAT IN THE WISDOM OF GOD, THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD, IT PLEASED GOD, BY THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING, TO SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE.

THE world lieth in wickedness. Men are sinners. In their natural state, they are rebels against the rightful authority of Heaven; and consequently, subject to the penalty of the divine law. To provide a remedy for the evils to which rebellious men are thus subject; to produce in them reconciliation to God, and save them from the natural consequences of sin and continued rebellion, human wisdom has, in every age, been taxed, and all the resources of human ingenuity have been exhausted. Attempts have been made to enlighten and reform the world by education and science, by legislation and civil authority, by appeals to reason and conscience. But all such attempts. without the aid and concurrent influence of revelation, have failed, and must forever fail. The history of the world abundantly proves that all such means are inadequate to secure the desired end.

<sup>\*</sup> This discourse was delivered at the ordination of the Rev. William Bates, in Northbridge, Mass., Nov. 5, 1845. And with some slight variations, it was again delivered, at the installation of the Rev. Jonathan Curtis, in Woodstock, Ct., Feb. 18, 1846.

For wise reasons God, for a long course of time, suffered the experiment to be repeatedly made, that men might everywhere see the result; and the result has been, everywhere and in all ages, the same. Everywhere experience has taught the same lesson, that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" that human wisdom and human power could not enlighten and save the world; that without the influence of divine revelation and the interposition of divine grace, men would continue in error and sin; and idolatry and polytheism, with all their cruelty and licentiousness, would continue to overspread the earth.

But after the experiment had been made, long enough and extensively enough, to establish and illustrate the fact, that no human contrivance, nor wisdom of man, was adequate to the exigency of the case; God was pleased to declare his purposes of mercy, and to make known to man, the expedient which Infinite Wisdom had devised, for reconciling and saving all who would believe his testimony concerning his Son, and receive him, as a perfect Mediator, and an all-sufficient Saviour. In the language of our text: "After that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdow knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe."

· To develop and illustrate the doctrine of the text; and thus to find matter for practical improvement, and for personal application, I shall pursue the following plan of discourse:

I. I shall endeavor to explain the term, to save, as used in the text; and show the nature and extent of the salvation, purchased by Christ and revealed in the gospel.

II. I shall inquire, what the instrumentality is, by

which this salvation is applied to men; as denoted by the phrase, "foolishness of preaching."

III. I shall speak of the wisdom of God, displayed in the adaptation of "preaching" to the reconciliation, reformation and salvation of believers.

In conclusion, I shall subjoin a few practical remarks, with an application, adapted to the occasion.

L I am to attempt an explanation of the term, "to save," as used in the text; and endeavor to show the nature and extent of the salvation, purchased by Christ and revealed in the gospel. "To save," in the most enlarged sense of the term, is to procure safety: to furnish protection and give security. It is to deliver those, who are in a state of suffering or fearful apprehension, from present and apprehended evil. limited sense, therefore, as used in our text, where it is applied to sinners, under the bonds of iniquity, and exposed to the penalty of a violated law, it denotes deliverance from the guilt and condemnation of sin; from the love and practice of iniquity, and from the bitter fruits, and everlasting consequences, which naturally flow from it. This salvation involves, therefore. both pardon and reformation, both forgiveness and repentance, both justification and sanctification. constitute a full salvation, as promised to believers in the gospel, both these parts are requisite; and those who separate what God has thus joined together, fall into error, hurtful and often fatal error.

A sinner cannot be safe, till he obtains pardon for his past transgressions; because without pardon the condemning sentence of a violated and unchangeable law, must forever stand against him. Although, he should repent, without being justified, (were true repentance, without justifying faith, possible,) he could do nothing to make atonement for his past sins. He could perform no works of supererogation; nor could he avoid the penalty of the law, and the bitter consequences of sins unpardoned, and guilt uncancelled. In order to be saved, therefore, a sinner must not only repent of sin, but believe the gospel; must be justified through faith in a crucified Redeemer. And for this justification abundant provision has been made. Yes, Christ, as an all-sufficient Saviour, has made an adequate atonement for the sins of the whole world. He "died the just for the unjust." "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." He "justified the law and made it honorable;" so that "God can now be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

On the other hand, were it possible for an impenitent sinner to believe, and obtain justification from all past transgressions, he would not be safe; he could not, indeed, be saved, without repentance and new obedience. For were he pardoned and justified to-day, he would be in transgression and under condemnation to-morrow. Nay, his guilt would be increased, and his condemnation enhanced, by the very circumstance of abused privileges and perverted grace. There is, it is true, "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" but, then, it is because "they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Accordingly, this view of salvation is often presented, and everywhere implied, in the statements of inspiration on the subject. Our Saviour himself said: "The Son of man is come to save his people from their sins." And the apostle, Paul, in language of the same import said, concerning the Saviour: "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Hence we may subjoin, under this head, (for the importance of the doctrine will justify the repetition of the statement,) that the salvation of the gospel involves both pardon and justification, on the one hand; and reformation and sanctification, on the other; and, therefore, requires in the recipient, both faith and repentance; or rather, we should say, these two conditions of salvation run into each other; and these two exercises when genuine, always go together. He that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, so as to be justified and saved, must likewise repent of all his sins, and turn unto God with all his heart. So, also, he that exercises genuine repentance toward God, will at the same time believe in Christ, and rely solely on his merits and mediation for pardon and justification.

Let none, therefore, hope for this salvation, till they have a faith, which works by love, and produces repentance and new obedience. Nor let any be satisfied with any supposed repentance or outward reformation; unless they find it connected with faith in Christ, and reliance for justification on his meritorious sufferings and mediation.

II. As was proposed, I proceed to inquire what the instrumentality is, by which the salvation, purchased by Christ, is applied to men, as denoted by the phrase "foolishness of preaching." The term foolishness may be supposed to have been ironically adopted by the apostle, from the language of reproach and derision, used by those who despised the apostles, and attempted to cast contempt on their preaching. Upon this supposition the import of the whole phrase, with which the term stands connected, is the same, as if the apostle had said: "Notwithstanding our preaching may appear weak and contemptible to the proud and self-sufficient philosophers of Greece; and they may

ridicule it as folly and enthusiasm; yet the wisdom of God has chosen this simple expedient; this "foolishness of preaching," as they call it, to confound all their boasted wisdom; to accomplish what human science and human skill could never reach; to bring men to repentance; and through faith in Christ to reconcile them to himself; and thus secure to all who believe, everlasting life and eternal salvation.

Still the inquiry returns upon us: "What is this simple expedient?" what is implied in the "preaching," which is so intimately connected with the salvation of The phrase here, we may answer, is evidently elliptical. The term, "preaching," however, in some of its modifications, is so often used in the Scriptures, as to furnish us with ample means of supplying the omission, and ascertaining the true meaning of it, as used in our text. The import evidently is the same as that of "preaching the gospel;" "preaching the word of God;" "preaching the truth, as revealed in the Bible;" declaring "all the counsel of God," as it stands recorded in the Scriptures by the pen of inspiration. Nothing short of this can come up to the full meaning of the term, "preaching," as used in our text; because nothing short of this can produce the effect, there ascribed to it. This alone is sufficient to make men wise unto salvation. Indeed, we are expressly taught by an inspired apostle, that those, who are "born again," are born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God. And our Saviour himself has declared, that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He has taught us likewise, that the work, begun in regeneration, is carried forward to its completion by the same instrumentality; that those, who are "born again" by the word of God, are "sanctified through the truth."

Nothing, therefore, can constitute the "preaching," with which salvation is connected; but that which makes a full and fair disclosure of the truth, as it is in Jesus: of all the doctrines and duties, taught in the holy Scriptures; of the whole revealed will of God. without disguise, and without partiality. Should any assume the office and title of preachers; and yet keep back part of the truth; should they omit the great and distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men; or, in the language of Scripture, "preach another gospel," their preaching would be in vain, or worse than in vain. Such preaching certainly would not subserve the high purpose, announced in our text. On the contrary it would lead men into error, soothe them in their sins, and fit them for destruction. No; the preaching, by which men are saved, is the preaching of the truth, of the gospel, of the whole revealed counsel of God. without reserve and without disguise.

I add further; a mere exhibition of the truth is not all that is implied in the "preaching," which goes to constitute the instrumentality of saving "them that be-To accomplish this glorious end most effectually, the truth must be exhibited by the living voice of the preacher, under the influence of the holy emotions and sanctified sympathies of a believing and renewed heart. A cold and formal annunciation, even of a heavenly message, will not gain attention, much less cordial belief, certainly not a practical regard. To reach the heart of the hearer, the truth must come from the heart of the preacher. To constitute the "preaching," which is the instrument of salvation, therefore, there must not only be a manifestation of the truth; but that manifestation must be so made, as to reach the heart and commend itself to the conscience of every man in

the sight of God. It must carry with it the evidence of sincerity; it must be the "speaking of the truth in love."

This is the "preaching," indicated in our text. This is the "preaching," enjoined by our blessed Saviour in his commission to his apostles and their successors in the ministry: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This is the "preaching," by which the latter-day glory of the church is to be ushered in, as announced to the beloved apostle, in the isle of Patmos; when he saw, in prospective vision, "an angel, flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and language and people." This, we may add, is the "preaching," which must be adopted in every age, and in eveery place, in order to save them that believe. indeed, in a measure, is the "preaching" of every "good minister of Jesus Christ."

III. Thus, in accordance with the proposed plan of discourse, I proceed to speak of the wisdom of God, displayed in the adaptation of "preaching" to the reconciliation, reformation and salvation of "them that believe."

We have seen, that the salvation of a sinner implies deliverance from the curse and condemnation of a violated law, as well as reconciliation to its requirements and submission to its authority; deliverance from the the guilt of past sins, as well as from the love and practice of iniquity. This salvation involves, as we have seen, the exercise of that faith, which justifies the previously condemned sinner; and of that repentance, which leads to "newness of life," and holy obedience. We have seen, likewise, that these essential conditions of salvation, are produced by the preaching

of the gospel; by the manifestation of the truth to the understanding and conscience.

Still the inquiry may be made: Why is preaching" adapted to the production of this result? Whyhas God chosen thus to carry out the plan of salvation, and "save them that believe" by an expedient so simple, as to excite the contempt of worldly wisdom and the disgust of human pride? To furnish a satisfactory answer to these inquiries, it may be sufficient for some, and perhaps it should satisfy all, to remark, that such is the will and pleasure of God; that it has "pleased" him to constitute a connection between this simple means and that glorious end, to ordain, that the principal instrumentality of salvation should be the preaching of the gospel. For what pleases him, it may be safely affirmed, must be wise, whether we are able to discern and comprehend the wisdom of it, or not; and what he has ordained, we may rest assured, is good, whether we can discover the goodness, or are obliged to leave it involved in mystery. Yes: his pleasure is always a "good pleasure:" and his counsels not only "stand fast forever;" but they are adopted in wisdom, and executed "in truth and faithfulness." We might, therefore, at once resolve the question of the wisdom and goodness of this appointment into the divine sovereignty, the secret counsels of Heaven, the unrevealed will of God; and leave the subject without further remark or illustration. since it is both pleasant and profitable, to trace the divine operations, whether in the works of nature or of grace, and thus "vindicate the ways of God to man;" we may proceed, as far as our limited vision extends, to trace the connection between "preaching" and "salvation;" and point out the adaptation of the one to the production of the other.

1. With this view, I remark, as faith is a necessary condition of justification, we may see, that the proper objects of faith must be presented to the understanding; the truth with its appropriate evidence must be set before the mind, clearly explained and fully illus-Men are rational beings; and as such, they should never be required to believe without evidence, nor expected to act without motives. Physical force may, indeed, compel them, sometimes to profess what they do not believe; and to act, in certain cases, without the approbation of their own judgment and conscience; but it can never give them "the faith which works by love;" nor furnish them with motives to act freely, and from correct principles. To secure this, the mind must be enlightened, the reason exercised and the judgment deliberately formed. The object of faith, therefore, must be clearly and fully exhibited to the mental eve.

All feeling, all the emotions of the heart, and even the promptings of the conscience, without this, are useless, or worse than useless; for they lead to wild fanaticism, slavish submission, or erratic and irregular action. We may ask, then, significantly and triumphantly, must not the objects and evidences of faith be set before the mind, in order to produce saving faith, and secure the salvation of the believer? What other mode; at least, what better mode of doing this, we may ask again, can be found, than that of "preaching," according to the appointment of Heaven? If, in the language of inspiration it is affirmed, that "faith cometh by hearing;" we may surely ask, in language of the same authority, and in a tone indicating the answer: "but how can they hear without a preacher?"

It may, indeed, be admitted, that other modes of presenting the truth to the human mind, are auxiliary

to the preaching of the gospel; and when used in connection with it, may be highly important, if not indispensable, to the success of the most able and faithful preacher. Parental instruction and the exercises of family worship, for example, may do much to enlighten the minds of children, and prepare them to receive and obey the truth, as it is in Jesus. So, too, the modern system of Sabbath-school instruction, properly conducted, can scarcely fail of aiding the preacher in his work, and leading many to a knowledge of the way of The solitary reading of the Scriptures, I add; or the diligent study of the Bible, seems necessary, in order to try the works and test the preaching of all uninspired men; and to confirm the testimony of all, who speak in the name of the Lord, and according to the Nor are religious conversation, prioracles of God. vate exhortation, familiar Christian conference and meetings for social prayer, without their use and salutary influence, in promoting the same cause, for which the preaching of the gospel was instituted. portant, indeed, are all these means of grace, that religion can scarcely exist, much less prosper, in a community where they are generally neglected.

To these admissions, I subjoin the remark, that the reading of religious books, is often blessed to the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. Thus it is said, that "Baxter was converted by books obtained of a pedlar; and Doddridge by writings of Baxter; and Wilberforce by a work of Doddridge; and Leigh Richmond by Wilberforce's Practical View;" and thousands, we have reason to believe, have received serious impressions, which resulted in their conversion and salvation, by reading "the Dairyman's Daughter," and other tracts of Leigh Richmond. The same might be said of the writings of Bunyan and

Watts and Hannah Moore and many others, both in this country and in Europe.

Still, in all these cases, the apparent causes of conversion probably depended on their intimate connection with the institution of preaching. neither parental instruction, nor the Sabbath-school recitation, nor religious conversation and conference, nor the reading of the best uninspired writings, nor even the perusal of the Bible itself, would have produced half the influence ascribed to these agencies, if the truth had never been presented to the same minds by the voice of the living preacher, warm from the heart. Besides, if the gospel had never been preached, the religious instruction of parents and of the Sabbath-school would never have been given; nor the religious conference and prayer-meeting maintained; nor the Bible and other religious books extensively published and generally read.

Experience and observation fully sustain this course of reasoning, and forcibly illustrate the doctrine of our text, that "preaching" is the principal instrument of salvation. For what is the condition, as to morals and even civilization, of those communities, where the gospel is not statedly and faithfully preached; and of those families, which do not attend on this ordinance of Heaven? In places where there is no stated preaching of the gospel, what becomes of parental instruction, of the Sabbath-school, of religious reading, of the Sabbath itself, and its holy rest and sacred and sanctifying influences? What is the moral and social character of those children, who are never brought to the sanctuary, and whose parents seldom or never attend on that institution, which God has appointed, "to save them that believe?"

I need not stop to answer these questions. The

answer exists in the mind of every one, who has travelled a little way from home, and observed, with a little care, the state of society in different communities; and the condition of families deprived of the privileges connected with the preaching of the gospel. They are but half-civilized, in the midst of civilization. They are heathen in a Christian land. The sweet charities of life they never taste. They lose all the benefits of an enlightened conscience, and of sanctified and well directed sympathies. They generally live devoted to Mammon, or Bacchus, or Mars, or some other heathen deity; and die without hope, "as the fool dieth," "as the beasts that perish!"

2. I remark again, as repentance, as well as faith, is a condition of salvation, or rather is always connected with genuine Christain faith, we may see the benefit of preaching, and its adaptation to the purpose of bringing men to this indispensable condition of salvation.

Men; as we said before, are rational beings; and must therefore, have the truth, with its appropriate evidences, fairly placed before their minds, in order to produce conviction, and establish them in "the faith." But I now subjoin, that they possess moral, as well as intellectual powers. They are susceptible of emotion, as well as conviction. They have hearts and consciences, as well as reason and understanding. need, therefore, to have the truth presented, in such a manner, as to lead them to feel its power, as well as to see its evidence and light. To secure this end it must be presented forcibly, tenderly, with a holy unction, in circumstances calculated to awaken all the sympathies of the soul, strip the covering from the conscience, and open the heart to receive it "in love."

To secure this end, I add, that preaching, which im-

plies verbal communication, the use of the voice and the eye, the glowing countenance, with all the illustrative and enforcing gestures of strong emotion, is peculiarly adapted; because it is evidently calculated to make a deep and enduring impression. Especially, is this true, when this dispensation of the word is made in the great congregation, assembled in the house of God, on the holy Sabbath.

There is something in the human voice, attended with the expressive eye, and significant gestures, involved in true and sacred eloquence, which is calculated to touch the heart of the hearer, and deeply impress him with the importance of the truth uttered. There is something, too, in the relation between a faithful pastor, or stated minister, and the people of his charge, which greatly adds to this impressive power. Besides all these considerations, it should be remembered, that men are social beings, possessing mutual sympathies, and capable of being moved, impressed, and even excited by the very presence, and animated looks, of a great and solemn assembly.

But above all, we must not forget, that the whole efficacy and saving effect of the gospel depends on the attending operations of the Holy Spirit. So true is this remark, that without these operations, the word of God is "a dead letter;" and the clearest manifestation of the truth, will be "a savor of death unto death." Yes; 'Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but God alone giveth the increase.' Hence the indispensable importance of prayer, in connection with the presentation of divine truth to the human mind; and hence the high importance of "preaching the word," in the assemblies of the saints, in the house of God, on the holy Sabbath, where prayer is wont to be made, where Christ has promised to meet his assembled people,

where the Holy Spirit is sent, in answer to the united and fervent supplications of those, "who keep holy time," "who meet with one accord" and "agree as touching the thing, which they ask of their heavenly Father;" where the combined agencies of the Word and Spirit are brought, at once, to bear on the understanding and conscience and heart of the sinner; and he is made to feel all the good influences of this world, in connection with "the powers of the world to come."

Thus I have endeavored to suggest such considerations, as seem calculated, to illustrate and vindicate the doctrine of our text. Others, perhaps, might be named; and still we should be unable to lay open the deep counsels of Heaven, and assign all the reasons, why God, in his wisdom, was "pleased" to make this arrangement of mercy; to establish this connection between means so simple and an end so glorious; to ordain, that by "the foolishness of preaching, he would save them, that believe."

But enough, it seems to me, has been said, to satisfy every humble inquirer after truth; and everything, beyond this, would be useless speculation, or impious presumption. How vain would it be, for us to inquire, whether God could have formed some other plan of redemption, and appointed some other means of grace and instruments of salvation! How useless, if not presumptuous, for us to ask, whether God could have saved men, without an atonement, without their own free agency, without the voluntary exercise of faith and repentance; in their sins; in a state of continued rebellion? How absurd and impious, to object to the plan of salvation, because the means are so simple; because we cannot see, why some other method was not adopted, to bring men to the exercise of faith and

repentance, and thus to reconcile them to God; because we have this treasure in earthen vessels;" and "men of like passions with other men," are chosen to communicate the message of grace and mercy to their fellow-men; instead of angels, literally "flying through the midst of heaven," and sounding aloud the trump of the gospel!

Enough has been said, I hope to satisfy all, who wish to know and obey the will of God; and to furnish matter of high importance for practical remarks and personal application. To a few such remarks, let me, in closing the discourse, ask your serious and self-applying attention.

I remark, in the first place, that we may learn, from our subject, the importance of a thoroughly educated ministry. However indispensable, in a minister of the gospel, we may consider natural gifts and Christian graces, they do not supersede the necessity of study and mental discipline. If the objects of faith must be fully and clearly set before the minds of believers; if the preaching of the gospel implies a presentation of the truth to the understanding, in a lucid and connected manner, with its appropriate evidence, then surely, the well qualified preacher must be either an inspired man, or a man of learning. And since the days of inspiration are passed, and the records of inspiration completed, it follows, that those, who are called to interpret the Scriptures, and to defend, illustrate and enforce their important and various instructions, should be men of disciplined minds, comprehensive knowledge and studious habits. They should be thoroughly educated, "scribes well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," able to "bring out of their treasure things new and old." They should be able to read the sacred Scriptures in the languages in which

they were originally written. They should be able to illustrate the doctrines and enforce the duties of Christianity, by a knowledge of human nature and a thorough acquaintance with the history of the human They should possess, and be able to apply to the explanation of the Scriptures, such literature and science, as the best education of their age and country can furnish. They should be qualified to trace "the analogy of religion to the course of nature;" and thus be prepared to meet the learned infidel and the ignorant gainsayer; removing the objections of the one, and silencing the scoffings and presumption of the other. And all this they should be able to do in the most attractive manner; seeking out acceptable words; and giving no unnecessary offence to Greek or to Barbarian, to the learned or to the unlearned; but commending the truth, in the sight of God, to every man; however cultivated his understanding, however enlightened his conscience, however pure and elevated his taste.

But I remark, secondly, that our subject shows us, likewise, the paramount importance of a pious ministry. If, in order to produce a rational and stable faith, the gospel must be preached in its full extent, with perspicuity and in due proportion; it is no less necessary, that "the truth should be spoken in love," with feeling, from the heart, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, in order to make a deep and lasting impression on the hearts and consciences of sinners; and thus lead them to evangelical repentance and holy obedience. An unconverted minister, whether learned or unlearned, will not, and cannot, preach the gospel, with that "unction from the Holy One," that "demonstration of the Spirit," that tenderness, perseverance

and spiritual energy, without which it has no power to convert and sanctify the soul.

Oh, how many careless sinners have been soothed in their sins, and left to perish in unbelief, through the influence of "philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ;" "through science, falsely so called," substituted for the gospel, and taught by men of unrenewed hearts and unsanctified minds! An unlearned and ignorant ministry is sufficiently pernicious in its influence upon the character of a community, even with something of truth and piety to modify it. But much worse is the influence of an unsanctified ministry, though connected with learning and worldly wisdom. In both cases, however, the sacred proverb will be found true: "Like people, like priest." They will mutually influence each other; and either sink into a state of bigotry and fanaticism, or wander into regions of scepticism and infidelity.

I remark, thirdly, that from the view taken of our subject, we may discover, moreover, the importance of a stated, permanent ministry. If much of the efficacy of preaching depends on the mutual affection and confidence, between a preacher and his hearers, growing out of the pastoral relation; then, the more intimate and permanent this relation becomes, the better both for minister and people; the greater the influence a pious and thoroughly educated minister may exert in the cause of Christ. Besides, permanency of residence affords opportunity for study and intellectual improvement, which cannot be enjoyed by a minister of a roving disposition and wandering habits. In order, like a good householder, to bring out of his treasure, "things new and old," a minister must be continually

gathering in, and laying up in store. But, how can this be done, without a fixed place of residence? How can he give himself to "reading, meditation and prayer," without books to read and consult, without a home, a closet and a study.

It is true, short settlements in the ministry, such as are prescribed by some ecclesiastical organizations, and encouraged and sanctioned by others, seem to possess some advantages; but they are evidently connected with greater disadvantages, both to ministers and people; producing in the former barrenness of mind and instability of character, and in the latter. "itching ears," idle curiosity, and ultimately divisions, disputings and often pernicious heresies. we likewise admit, that even itinerant preaching may produce temporary good effects; and in some cases, it seems necessary to prepare the way for the settlement of ministers and the permanent influence of stated preaching. Evangelists, therefore, should be occasionally sent forth, to "stir up the brethren," and gather churches in the waste places of Zion, and in heathen But when this is done; when converts are made and gathered into churches, a permanent ministry must be secured, or all the labors of evangelists and itinerant preachers will soon be lost. Indeed, such occasional preaching and superficial lecturing, as it is often conducted among us, by incompetent and sometimes unprincipled men, seems rather calculated to pull down and destroy religious institutions, than to build them up, and secure permanent salutary effects. And where there is not already an established ministry, or where it does not soon follow, such excitements and even apparent reformations, as are produced by the best itinerant preaching and occasional lecturing, are always ephemeral, evanescent, and of little value

to the cause of pure religion, and to the peace, order and happiness of society.

Notwithstanding the admissions which we have made, therefore, the proposition still remains true, that the ministry even of the most learned and pious man, to answer the purpose of its appointment, in the highest degree, must be a stated, permanent ministry. It was evidently designed, "in the wisdom of God," that this should be the condition of the gospel ministry, wherever converts should be made and churches established. Hence the apostle Paul directs Timothy to ordain elders, or stated ministers, pastors and teachers, in every place. And experience, in every age and in every country, where the experiment has been made, has shown the wisdom of this arrangement.

Hence, I remark fourthly, our subject shows us the momentous responsibilities, which rest upon the designated ministers of the gospel. They are under obligation to seek the requisite qualifications for the work, before they presume to enter upon it. They must, indeed, be "called of God, as was Aaron." But, if any are thus called to preach the gospel; they are called likewise, to prepare to preach, with ability and faithfulness; bringing "beaten oil into the sanctuary;" "rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to every one a portion in due season."

To this end they are bound to obtain the best and most finished education, both literary and theological, within their reach. With the same view, they must, and if they are faithful to their Master, they will continue to study through the whole course of their ministry, "giving themselves to reading, meditation and prayer." And for this purpose, that they may give themselves wholly to the work, and become workmen, that need not be ashamed, they are under obli-

gation to keep themselves, as free as possible, from the cares and perplexities of the world. They should have no other business, but the work of the ministry. Political discussions, and party animosities, they should avoid. They should "know no man after the flesh." They should resolve to know nothing, and make known nothing, among their people, but Christ Jesus, and him crucified. They should never forget, for a moment, that their great business is to "win souls to Christ," and to edify his people and train them for the service and enjoyment of God forever. How great, then, are the responsibilities, which press upon those, who are called to the work of the ministry; and how much do they need the prayers and sympathies of the friends of the Redeemer, as well as the arm of Almighty grace, to sustain them!

Hence I remark, fifthly and finally, our subject shows us, that it is the duty of all Christians to organize themselves into Christian societies, or join themselves to some organized church of Christ, where they dwell; and thus united, to provide for the able, faithful and stated preaching of the gospel. Their own edification demands this of them; for all who are saved, must be sanctified through the truth, as well as born again by the incorruptible seed of the word. Their children claim this at their hands; for if they are to be saved, they must be saved by the appointed instrumentality of a preached gospel, and thus trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They are bound to do this, likewise, for the benefit of their friends and neighbors and the community around them, that the careless and improvident may be furnished with the means of grace and salvation. the spirit of the gospel is a missionary spirit, a diffusive spirit, a benevolent spirit; freely giving, as it has freely received.

Our subject, my brethren in the ministry, is full of interest to us; so, indeed, it is to every individual in this assembly. And I might without impropriety, proceed to make the application, as broad as the subject. But I have only time for a few words of exhortation and congratulation, addressed to the candidate for ordination; and to the church and society to whom he is sent to preach the gospel, and over whom he is now to be placed as a Pastor and Teacher.

My beloved Son.—You have, I doubt not, looked forward to this day and to these solemnities with much solicitude, and a serious apprehension of the weight of responsibility, which was about to come upon you. I too, have looked forward, in deep sympathy with you. Standing in the endearing relation which I hold to you; and having tasted the cup, which is now given you to drink, I know how to feel for you. I can, indeed, enter into all the feelings, which I suppose agitate your bosom; for I have to-day, a vivid recollection of my own solicitude and apprehensions, when more than forty years ago, I was placed in a position, similar to that in which you now stand. In view of the subject of this discourse, you may, indeed, feel a deep solicitude. For the responsibility, which you are assuming, as the subject discussed most clearly shows, is one of great weight and deep interest. from long and happy experience, I can assure vou. that you need not fear. The work which you have chosen, though great and arduous, is a good work. And the Master, whom you serve is a good Master; faithful to his promises, and plenteous in his mercy and grace. If, while you utter the solemn ordination-vows, and while the hands of the Presbytery are upon you, you can take hold of the arm of Almighty strength, and seize the gracious promise, which comes annexed

to your high commission, you need not fear, for you may rest assured, that the promised grace will be sufficient for you.

With what of talents is given you; with what of preparation you have been able, by a long course of study to make, and with what of grace is promised, and is ready to be bestowed upon you, you may take the vow, assume the office, and go forth to the work of the ministry, with alacrity and hope of success. Be faithful, and you will be happy in your work. Be faithful unto death, and you shall receive a crown of life. Preach the word, the gospel, the preaching, by which it pleases God to save them that believe. As a good shepherd feed the sheep of the flock of Christ; leading them into green pastures and by still Feed, too, the lambs of the flock: watching over them by day and by night; guarding them against the ravages of the devouring wolf; and gathering them with care into the fold of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. And, then, when he shall appear, you also shall appear with him in glory.

"My son, if thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine; yea my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things." But I must not anticipate the solemn charge, that awaits you. I will, therefore, only add my paternal benediction, and ardent prayer, that you may be "a good minister of Jesus Christ;" have a long and prosperous and happy ministry among this people; and in due time, long after I shall have finished the work given me to do, and have slept with our fathers—may you follow, in peace, all who through faith and patience have gone to inherit the promises.

To the church, and society connected with it, who are about to receive another pastor, sent, we hope, by the Great Head of the church, I have only to say, re-

ceive him, brethren and friends, in love, and as an ascension-gift of the glorified Redeemer. You will find him, I trust, a faithful and an affectionate pastor. he is yet a young man; and you must not expect to find in him, at once, the experience and maturity of He is, too, as you know, "a man of like passions with other men." He will, therefore, need your candor, your prayers, your kindest sympathies. Let him expect them; and let him not be disappointed. have seen, how great are his responsibilities; and you have seen too, how intimately your own spiritual good, and that of your children and the community about you, are connected with his work, and the gospel which he is called to preach. O, hinder him not! Let him not be discouraged by coldness, inattention and indifference, on your part. But help him by your prayers. Encourage him by your kindness. Stay up his hands when they are raised in prayer to God; and strengthen his feeble knees, when he is weary and ready to falter in the race.

But as I said to him, I must not anticipate the solemn charge that awaits you. May the Great Head of the church smile upon you and bless you. May the relation, which is about to be established between you and your chosen pastor, be a blessing, a lasting blessing to you and your children. May you and he walk together in peace and love; and finally dwell together in the church triumphant.

And may we all, my hearers, so apply the subject of this discourse; and so regard the lessons, which it teaches, as to become eternally interested in the salvation, which it involves; and prepared to meet the redeemed out of every nation, and participate with them in the everlasting service and enjoyment of our God and Redeemer.—Amen.

### LECTURE XXV.

## DEPRESSION OF SPIRITS IN SEASONS OF AFFLICTION.

#### JOB XXIII, 1-8.

THEN JOB ANSWERED AND SAID, EVEN TO-DAY IS MY COMPLAINT BITTER; MY STROKE IS HEAVIER, THAN MY GROANING. OH, THAT I KNEW WHERE I MIGHT FIND HIM! THAT I MIGHT COME EVEN TO HIS SEAT!

HAPPY are they who are never constrained to adopt this, or similar language of despondency. Happy indeed are they, who under every stroke, through every change and trial, are supported and comforted, rendered perfectly submissive, and preserved from every bitter complaint. Happy, thrice happy, are they who. having been reconciled to God, continue to walk so closely with him, as on every occasion to find immediate access to the mercy-seat, and obtain grace to help in every time of need. Comparatively few, however. if any, even of those whose hearts have been renewed. whose faith in the divine promises is strong, whose love of the divine character is ardent, whose submission to the divine will is cordial, whose obedience to the divine law is sincere and habitual; comparatively few of these devoted servants of God, are so completely sanctified, and enabled to keep their Christian graces in such full and constant exercise, as to enjoy

this uninterrupted happiness, this privilege of angels, this felicity of heaven.

Job is presented to us as a good man, a man of eminent piety and distinguished benevolence. By an apostle of our Lord he is celebrated for his exemplary patience, and by the inspired author of the book, which bears his name, he is declared to have been "a perfect and upright man." Improving the light which was given him, he had learned to "fear God and eschew evil." Through the anticipated mediation of the Son of God, the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, he had been reconciled to God. Believing the promise of a Saviour to come; trusting, that at the latter day his Redeemer would stand upon the earth, he was waiting for this consolation of Israel, walking by faith and living in habitual obedience. But notwithstanding his permanent principles, established character and prevailing hopes, he was still subject to depression of spirits. In a season of heavy and complicated afflictions, he experienced that distress of mind, which dictated the desponding language of our text.

Now "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Those, therefore, who have obtained like precious faith and similar habitual submission with Job, may with him experience seasons of darkness and distress. Especially when, like him, they are overwhelmed with sudden calamity, they may for a time forget their refuge, and lie "under the hidings of God's face;" deprived of the light of his countenance, covered with darkness, bewildered by doubts, cut off from the mercy-seat, driven almost to despair. Thus, having the same leading views, possessing the same general character, and passing, through the same state of trial, the pious in every age

may experience the same temporary darkness and distress, with this ancient servant of God; and with propriety adopt his lamentation: "Even to-day is my complaint bitter; my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!"

This language, however, is not exclusively applicable to the children of God. Even impenitent sinners, who are yet destitute of saving faith, unreconciled to God and without hope in the world, may in seasons of sorrow and conviction have feelings, so far resembling those of Job, as to appropriate to themselves his language, and with truth repeat the declarations in the text. Indeed a part of these declarations will always be found strikingly appropriate to afflicted sinners. For when their earthly expectations fail, when distress and anguish come upon them, when they find vanity inscribed on everything below the skies, their complaint must be peculiarly bitter, and their "stroke heavier than they can bear." Although they have no love, either for the divine character or law, nor any correct views of that happiness, which flows from communion with God; yet finding that all earthly comforts fail; and looking about them for something to soothe their aching hearts and support their sinking spirits, their attention may be arrested by the exceedingly great and precious promises of the gospel. Having learned by experience, that the pleasures and riches and honors of the world are unsatisfying and transitory, they may feel a sincere, though vet indefinite desire to become interested in the promises and consolations of the gospel. If they have any faint conceptions of a merciful God, any indistinct apprehensions of a mercy-seat, will they not wish to find that God, and obtain access to that mercy-seat? will they not say: "Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat?"

Let us, therefore, consider the language of the text more particularly, *first* in its primary application to imperfect saints, and *then* in its secondary application to impenitent sinners.

L Various are the trials under which, and frequent the occasions on which, this desponding language may express the feelings even of the eminently pious. A recollection of Job's situation, when he uttered it, will naturally lead us to the contemplation of some of them. It is not necessary for this purpose, however, to repeat the history, which minutely records his complicated afflictions. For it is already familiar to the mind of every reader of the Bible. He had been suddenly stripped of all his substance. His children had gone down to the grave, in a moment. He had been smitten with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. The great adversary of man had assailed him with all his tempting arts. The wife of his bosom had provoked him to curse his God. even his three pious friends who came to visit and comfort him, instead of administering consolation, had. by mistaking his character and charging him with hypocrisy, aggravated his grief.

Thus overwhelmed by successive calamities, and sunk in the abyss of sorrow; thus reduced to a state of penury, bereaved, at once, of all his children, distracted by pain, assailed by the tempter, and even misrepresented and reproached by his friends, this pious man seems for a moment to have lost his confidence and hope. He, who had with submission said, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" he, who had with confidence said, "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" he,

who had with assurance said, "I know, that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eye shall behold, and not another;" he, who had been thus submissive, thus confident, thus full of faith and hope, was at this time bewildered by doubts, shut up in darkness, cut off from the mercy-seat, unable to find his God. to-day," said he, "is my complaint bitter; my stroke is heavier, than my groaning. Oh, that I knew, where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" "Behold I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."

How many, like Job, under similar trials, have experienced similar depression of spirit! Often have we, who are called by our professional duty to visit the sick, and the afflicted seen those, who had given the best evidence of a Christian temper, a Christian character and a Christian hope, left for a season in darkness. Often have we found them, like the pious author of our text, depressed in spirit, and deprived of hope. Often have we heard them, repeating the language of the text, or the no less affecting language. in which the pious Psalmist records his experiences of darkness and distress: "Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up; while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted:"-" Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not thyself from my supplication. Attend unto me and hear me: I mourn in my complaint and make a noise:"-"My heart is sore

pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me."

This occasional despondency, especially in seasons of heavy calamity, of severe pain, or great affliction, all imperfect saints may experience. I say, may experience; for it is not certain, that all will. able to support and comfort his children under all their burthens, through all their trials, in all their afflictions. Nor will he, for a moment, hide his face from them, except for their good; to render them more humble, to cause them to feel more absolutely their dependence on him, to induce them to seek more earnestly his grace, and lead them to devote themselves more perfectly to his service. But, when in his infinite wisdom he sees, that any of them need this correction, this sore chastisement for the sanctification and salvation of their souls, he will in his infinite goodness lay it upon them; he will correct them, not for his pleasure, but for their profit; not in anger, but in love; not to destroy, but to save; he will cast them into the furnace of affliction, that they may be refined, and come forth like gold seven times purified.

Thus from a view of the character and condition of Job, when he uttered the language of our text, from the corresponding language of the pious psalmist, from a careful observation of the sick and afflicted in our pastoral visits, from the testimony, we might add, of the most eminent Christians of every age and country, who have left a particular relation of their experiences, it is evident, that this desponding language of Job may express the occasional feelings of imperfect saints; especially in seasons of peculiar trial and temptation.

II. Let it not be forgotten, however, that this lan-

guage of distress is not exclusively applicable to the pious. It may likewise express the feelings of impenitent sinners, in seasons of sorrow, conviction and fearful apprehension. It cannot, indeed, be adopted by them in the same sense, in which it was used by Job. For he had tasted and seen, that the Lord is good; had known the joy of believing; had experienced the blessedness of that man, whose sins are forgiven and whose iniquities are blotted out. His, therefore, was a holy desire of communion with God, a positive love of holiness. He could say with the psalmist: "O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." But, without sincere repentance and a radical change of heart, this holy desire, this disinterested love, cannot exist in the human breast. "For the carnal mind is enmity against God." however, impenitent sinners, who have no correct views of the divine character, nor any submissive feelings to the divine will, may in seasons of disappointment, sickness and sorrow, be led to reflection and thus be convinced of sin. In these moments of partial conviction and inward distress, they may at least, feel the want of religious support and consolation, and thus find the language of our text accordant to their feelings.

Observe, here likewise we use the conditional term, may. For it is not certain, that impenitent sinners, even in seasons of affliction, will be led to sober reflection. It is not certain, that those who have long abused the mercy of God, perverted his judgments, reviled his word, profaned his name and done despite to the Spirit of his grace, will ever again feel the

least awakening from their stupor, the least anxiety for their souls. They may have acquired the perverse faculty of dissipating all reflection, and formed the fatal habit of drowning sorrow in mirth and wine. They may have obstinately continued in sin, till the day of grace is past, till their consciences are seared, till they are past feeling, till they have been given up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind, till strong delusions are sent upon them, and they are left to believe a lie, and trust in a refuge of lies.

Unhappy men, who are thus hardened against correction, who are thus blind to their danger, who are thus stupid in the most awakening seasons, who thus despise the rod and him that doth appoint it! Unhapby men, who can neither be melted by mercies, nor subdued by judgments; who can neither be drawn by the cords of love, nor persuaded by the terrors of the Lord; who "stretch out their hand against God, strengthen themselves against the Almighty, and run upon the thick bosses of his bucklers!" Unhappy men, who even in seasons of sickness and sorrow remain insensible of their guilt, cherish their unholy desires and utter the language of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost! Oh, it is a melancholy scene, to behold a hardened offender, rolling sin under his tongue, as a precious morsel, even while he groans beneath its bitter curse; blindly embracing and pressing to his bosom the deadly monster, which already bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder; refusing to repent and be converted, though the time of refreshing, has come from the presence of the Lord.

But few, however, we hope and have reason to believe, are so completely hardened against correction, as never to feel some faint convictions of sin, some fearful apprehensions of a judgment to come. On the

contrary it is evident, that those, who in seasons of prosperity have lived without God and carelessly pursued a course of sinful indulgence, when the evil days come, when they are oppressed by heavy calamity, when deprived of health and friends when their earthly hopes and short-lived pleasures are destroyed. when their idols, like Dagon before the ark, are fallen down and demolished, when, in a word, some unexpected event has suddenly cut them off from every source of carnal joy, and at once dried up those polluted streams of worldly pleasure, by which they had been so long intoxicated, stupefied, bewildered; it is evident, I say, from observation, that impenitent sinners in seasons, like these, generally feel the want of religious consolation, and form at least some faint resolutions of seeking it. It is true, their desires are unholy, their resolutions selfish and their views contract-Still, however, believing, or rather having some indistinct apprehension, that there is a God, seated on a throne of mercy, they feel not only a distress on account of their sins; but a desire, which they may express in the language of the text: "Oh, that I knew. where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!"

Happy would it be, if such impressions were never lost! Happy, if such seasons of correction were never suffered to pass unimproved! Happy, if all, who are thus made to feel their need of divine consolation, always continued to feel; till they were thoroughly convinced of their sins and duly humbled for their iniquities; till, seeking in the way of divine appointment, they found access with confidence to the mercy-seat; till, by faith and repentance, they obtained pardon and grace to help in time of need; till, being justified from their sins, and renewed in the spirit of their

minds, they possessed "peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost!"

Our subject, my hearers, furnishes matter for personal application and general improvement. For it may be presumed, that most, if not all of us, either as impenitent sinners, or imperfect saints, or in both these characters, have some experimental knowledge of the subject. We may add, that in one or the other of these characters, we may still expect seasons of trial and depression; and it will be well, if they do not prove to some of us seasons of utter darkness and endless despair.

In the first place, let this application be made for the improvement of Christians; of those who have a Christian hope, founded on Scripture evidence; of those, who from an examination of their hearts and lives have come to the conclusion, that they have "passed from death unto life," that they have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God;" that they are led by the Spirit and actuated by a principle of holiness, disposing them to avoid that which is evil, and do that which is good, and to "do all to the glory of God." To such our subject may be applied with reference to past, present, and future trials.

1. Have you never, my Christian friends, in times past, felt something of that perplexity of mind and deprivation of spiritual consolation, which dictated the language of the text? Have you in no season of trial found your "complaint bitter" your mind clouded, your heart cold, and your way to the throne of grace obstructed? Have you at no period of your Christian life, been depressed in spirit, and almost overwhelmed with despair? If you have with Job, experienced such seasons of darkness and depression,

you have with him unquestionably seen the wisdom of God, in suffering you to be thus tempted. You have found it good for you, to be in heaviness for a season. It has increased your humility, caused you to prize more highly divine support, rendered you more watchful, induced you to walk more closely with God, and disposed you to seek his grace with more constancy and greater earnestness. Thus as your sufferings abounded, so your consolation also abounded. Though grief endured for a night, yet joy, increased joy, came in the morning. Our subject, therefore, with this retrospective application, teaches you to praise the Lord for his chastisements, and acknowledge with gratitude, that it is good for you, that you have been afflicted.

2. Are there none of you who profess to be Christians, and who have hitherto maintained a Christian character, now under trials? none, whose former hopes have become obscure? none, who "under the hidings of God's face" are ready to say: "Even to-day is my complaint bitter; my stroke is heavier than my groaning?" none, whose soul thirsteth for God, whose flesh longeth for him in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is? To such we address the language both of exhortation and promise: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:" "Who is among you, that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stav himself upon his God:" "In a little wrath he hideth his face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy upon thee:" "Why art thou cast

down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

3. Do any of you, my Christian friends, now rejoice in hope? Consider the days of darkness, which may yet come. Have you now that peace of God, which passeth understanding? Does the Spirit witness with your spirits, that you are the children of God? Have you the testimony of your consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, you have your conversation in the world? Are you filled with all joy and peace in believing, through the power of the Holy Ghost? Happy then is your condition, and glorious are your prospects. Giving God the glory, you may go on your way rejoicing. But while you lay hold of the promises, and appropriate to yourselves the consolations, which they afford: while you trust in the Lord, and rejoice in his favor; think not, that your warfare is accomplished; remember, that you are yet in a state of probation; forget not, that temptations surround you, that trials are before you, that changes await you. Wherefore be sober, while you rejoice; be vigilant, while you hope. Stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ hath made you free. Contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints. Keep under your bodies; and crucify the flesh with the lusts thereof. Take to yourselves the whole armour of God, that you may be able to resist the fiery darts of the adversary. Walk closely with God, that you may not lose the light of his countenance. Anticipate afflictions, that you may seek support, and be prepared to meet them with fortitude; that, when stricken, you may not find the stroke heavier, than you can bear; that, when chastened, you may receive the chastisement patiently; that, when troubled on every side, you may not be distressed; when perplexed, you may not be in despair; when persecuted, you may not be forsaken; when cast down, you may not be destroyed; that in seasons of affliction and calamity, you may "find your God, and come even to his seat."

In the second place, let it not be forgotten, that our subject may likewise furnish matter, for personal application, to impenitent sinners. To them too it may be applied, with the same reference to past, present and future trials. And are there none of this character present? Are none of us, my hearers, according to the distinguishing and appropriate use of the phrase, impenitent sinners? Have we all such evidence of our repentance, such marks of regeneration, such proof of holy principle, as to furnish us with a rational Christian hope, as to support us in refusing to be called impenitent sinners?

Is there, then, no unjust person among us, who, having defrauded his neighbor, refuses to restore that which he hath taken away? Is there no intemperate man, who, though often admonished of his sin, continues to follow strong drink from morning to evening? Is there no profane swearer, who presumptuously, and in contempt of the plainest and most positive command, taketh the name of God in vain? Such surely, and all who resemble them in allowed iniquity, are impenitent sinners. They carry about with them the marks of their impenitency, and the sure signs of their approaching destruction. For an inspired apostle hath said: "Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

But those, who are guilty of scandalous crimes and gross immoralities, are not the only persons, who fall under the general denomination of impenitent sinners. "The Scriptures have concluded all under sin." Of course, all are impenitent sinners, who have not seen the plague of their hearts, humbled themselves before God, and consecrated all their faculties and talents to his service. Whatever may be your external character; however under the influence of worldly wisdom, you may avoid public offences, yet if you live in the practice of secret sins, or even indulge evil thoughts, unholy desires and wicked purposes; if indeed you allow yourselves in any sin, whether of thought, word or deed; or remain easy and contented in the neglect of any known duty, then are you in the strict and appropriate meaning of the phrase, impenitent sinners. Let all, therefore, who are designated by this phrase, and included in this comprehensive class of hearers. attend to the solemn application of our subject.

1. Look back on the past. Recollect what scenes you have been called to witness; what thoughts have entered your minds, what feelings have agitated your bosoms, and what purposes you have formed for the regulation of your conduct. To refresh your memories, let me ask; have you never, in some season of sickness or affliction, felt the want of religious consolation and support? Have no distressing doubts concerning your future condition, no fearful apprehensions of a judgment to come, occasionally disturbed your carnal peace and interrupted the pleasures of sin? Has not the word of God, when clearly opened and skilfully applied, sometimes pierced, like a two-edged

sword, even to your hearts? While the judgments of Heaven, which are abroad in the earth, have been falling upon you, have you not been led to consider your ways? Has not the Spirit of God, operating on your minds, frequently roused your sleeping consciences, and "harrowed up your guilty souls?" have you not, on these occasions, resolved to break off your sins by repentance, and your iniquities by turning unto the Lord? But your afflictions, perhaps, have been removed; and you, alas! have carelessly suffered your solemn impressions to pass away without improvement. Your anxiety has abated, and your resolutions have been broken; you resolved well, but you "re-resolved, and still remain the same," the same impenitent sinners, without God in the world, and exposed every hour to the fearful doom of an everlasting separation from his presence and the glory of his power.

Think, sinner, how much such an abuse of the means of grace; such a neglect of the admonitions of Providence, of the calls of the gospel and the strivings of the Spirit, must have aggravated your guilt and increased your danger. Reflect, I beseech you, on this aggravated guilt and increased danger; and resolve henceforth never to resist the Spirit, lest he flee from you forever. "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

2. Regard the *present*. Do any, who have hitherto neglected warnings, abused mercies, and perverted judgments, now feel a sense of their danger? Are any, who have hitherto lived without God in the world, now under the chastening rod, now impressed with a sense of their guilt and danger, now filled with fearful apprehensions of a judgment to come, now ready

that I might come even to his seat?" Let them never lose this desire, till holy affections supply its place. Let them never suffer these impressions to wear away; till they obtain peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let them never cease to fear; till their fear is cast out by perfect love. Let them repent and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon them. Now is the accepted time. This is the day of grace. The Spirit of God is striving with you. Resist not his suggestions. Embrace the offered mercy. Lose not the opportunity by delay. Return; come. To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

3. Look forward to the future. Are any impenitent sinners now perfectly easy and contented in their sins, speaking peace to their souls, believing a lie, trusting to a refuge of lies, going down to the grave with a lie in their right hand? Let such be once more warned of their danger. The evil day will surely come. How often is the candle of the wicked suddenly put out! Your false hopes will sooner or later, be cut off and perish, and, without repentance, you will have your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers. Neglect not, I beseech you, this warning, lest you should suffer the day of grace to pass unimproved; lest you should not see your danger, till it is too late to escape; lest you should finally fall under this heavy, but just, denunciation of the Almighty: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation and

your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you." Wherefore be persuaded to "seek the Lord, while he may be found, and call upon him, while he is near." And may he, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, shine into all our minds, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—Amen.

### LECTURE XXVI.

# SALVATION BY GRACE, WITH A TEST OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

#### 1 CORINTHIANS VL 90.

Ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify god in your body, and in your epirit. which are god's.

Christianity is a consistent religion, worthy of its divine Author, and adapted to the wants of man. Like a well proportioned and well finished edifice, all its parts are fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth. In it, all the divine attributes appear in harmony; and the character, the condition, the duty and the destination of the human race are clearly exhibited. It unites justice with mercy, grace with truth, pardon with sanctification, holiness with felicity. While it offers forgiveness, it calls to repentance; while it promises assistance, it demands active obedience; while it opens the gates of heaven, it marks out the straight and narrow way, by which alone they can be entered. It is truly a religion of mercy, of grace, of love; but it is likewise a religion of justice, of truth, of purity, of holiness. In it, indeed, justice and mercy meet together; and righteousness and peace embrace each other.

Christians are taught by their inspired instructors. that they are saved, not by works of righteousness, which they have done, but by grace through faith; and yet they are required by the same authority, as evidence of their faith and proof of their gracious acceptance with God, to maintain good works: to bring forth fruit unto holiness; to deny ungodliness with every worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the world. They are even taught, that sanctification is the only sure evidence of justification; that genuine repentance will always bring forth "fruit, meet for repentance:" that saving faith must work by love; that a well-grounded hope cannot fail to purify the heart; that, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; and if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. Thus the doctrines and the duties, the promises and the precepts, the consolations and the commands of the gospel are united; and rendered subservient to each other.

Our text is an example of this union and mutual subserviency. It consists, you perceive, of a doctrinal statement and a practical exhortation. The exhortation is a direct inference from the doctrine; and the doctrine furnishes the purest and most commanding motives, to induce us to regard the exhortation. The doctrine is a doctrine of grace: "Ye are bought with a price." The exhortation is an exhortation to holy obedience: "Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

Our text, then, naturally divides itself into two distinct parts. The doctrine, which stands first in order, first claims our attention.

I. "Ye are bought with a price." If it be asked, of whom the apostle says this; we answer, of them in the first place, to whom the language of the text

was originally addressed. They are described in the preface to the epistle itself, in these words: "Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sothenes our brother unto the church of God, which is at Corinth; to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus, our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." All that is implied in the statement of the text, then, was said with primary reference to believers at Corinth, when the epistle was written. But, it may be asked, Was the application intended to be confined to them; and is the language of the statement to receive this restricted interpretation? In answer to this inquiry, it might be deemed sufficient to remark, that the divine government proceeds upon general principles, that God is no respecter of persons, that what was true, therefore, of those, to whom the language of the text was originally addressed, will in every age and in every place, be true, of all who possess the same character. The question, however, seems to have been anticipated and answered, in a clause of the introduction to the epistle, already quoted; where the apostle subjoins to the description of the Corinthian Christians, the following comprehensive language: "with all, that in every place, call upon the name of Jesus our Lord, both theirs and ours." But if this is not sufficient to justify an extended interpretation of the statement, we have an inspired canon of interpretation, decisive of the question; for we are expressly told that "no Scripture is of any private interpretation." We are not required, therefore, to restrict the meaning and limit the application of a Scripture promise or declaration to the particular persons to

whom it was directly made. But we are authorized to extend it to all who possess the same character and are placed in similar circumstances. Accordingly, what the apostle said to Corinthian Christians, in his time, we are now authorized to say to all, "who have obtained like precious faith," to all believers: Ye are bought with a price.

If it be inquired again, what is meant by the term, bought, as used in application to the redemption of sinners? We answer that it involves a strong metaphor, in allusion to the emancipation of slaves. We add, the propriety and force of this figure of speech evidently depends on another, which the sacred writers have employed in describing the natural state of fallen This is frequently represented as a state of bondage, of slavery, of captivity. Impenitent sinners are expressly said to be "under the bondage of corruption;" "sold under sin;" "serving divers lusts and passions;" even "led captive at the will of Satan." In allusion, therefore, to the usual manner, in which captives and slaves are redeemed and restored to libertv. by the interposition of friends and the payment of a ransom, deliverance from this state of sin and misery is aptly expressed by the metaphor in the text. The consistency of the Scriptures on this subject may be traced still further. For sinners are not only represented as captives or slaves, and the manner of their deliverance expressed by the payment of a ransom; but the state, into which they are brought, when thus delivered, is denoted by a corresponding figure; it is called a state of freedom, of liberty; yes, of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

By the metaphor, bought, therefore, we may understand deliverance from the power and condemnation of sin; or what is clearly and definitely expressed by

our apostle, in another place, where he says, "Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Indeed, this is the very nature and object of the redemption of Christ. It is a redemption not from punishment only, but from sin also; a deliverance not from misery merely, but from that which is "the cause of all our woes" likewise. of man came to redeem, to ransom, to save his people from their sins. We may add, the terms redeem and ransom as well as bought are frequently used, to denote this deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. Thus our Saviour said of himself expressly: "The Son of man has come to give his life a ransom for manv." And thus an inspired apostle declared: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law."

We shall finish our illustration of the doctrinal part of the text, with a few remarks on the value of this ransom, the price of this redemption. "Ye are bought," says the apostle to believers, "with a price." The term price, in this connection, is emphatic. It is of high import. For we are repeatedly told by the inspired apostles, that this price was no less than the blood of Christ. In proof of this position, I might refer you to many passages in their epistles. One, however, is sufficient for our present purpose. In the eighteenth and nineteenth verses of the first chapter of the first epistle of Peter, you will find the following appeal to Christians: "Forasmuch as ye know, that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

The phrase, blood of Christ, is here unquestionably used in a figurative sense, to denote all his sufferings

for us, in the manger, in the wilderness, in the garden and on the cross; all that was laid upon him, in accomplishing the work of redemption; all that he endured, when he left the bosom of the Father, took upon him the form of a servant, submitted to reproach and persecution, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and died, the just for the unjust, that we might have redemption through faith in his blood, might be made the righteousness of God, in him and thus obtain everlasting life. By the blood of Christ. as the price of our redemption, therefore, we are to understand all his sufferings for us, as sinners; but more especially his final sufferings, his agonies in the garden and his death on the cross. And, that he did thus suffer for us, on account of our sins, in order to deliver us from the power of sin and the curse of the law, and restore to us the image and favor of God, is abundantly evident from the whole tenor of the Scriptures. "He was wounded," says the prophet Isaiah, speaking of his sufferings by way of anticipation, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed." was delivered" says the evangelist John, in giving the history of his actual sufferings, "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." "He gave himself for us;" "bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," say the inspired apostles in their sacred epistles, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity," "that he might reconcile us to God," "that we might obtain everlasting life through him." But time would fail me, were I to attempt to recite all the passages, in which he is said to have suffered and died for us; in which he is represented, as our surety,

Redeemer, Saviour; in which he is declared to have been a ransom, a propitiation, a sacrifice for us.

The doctrine of the atonement, as thus taught in the text, it must be admitted, involves a mystery; a mystery, which we cannot explain. But for our reconciliation to it, let us remember, that it is a mystery of love. of compassion, of divine condescension. It is a mystery, we are told, into which even angels desire to look; but it is one which they; which the highest created intelligences cannot understand. Much less, then, should we expect to comprehend these deep counsels of God; and be able to measure "the height and depth and length and breadth of this love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Why it was necessary for the healing of the nations, that the Son of man should be kifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, for the healing of the children of Israel; why it was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, that Christ should be betrayed and crucified; why the eternal Word was obliged to be made flesh, assume human nature, and in this humble form die on the cross, in order to condemn sin in the flesh and redeem sinners from its power and condemnation; why it was needful for him to become a propitiatory sacrifice, give his life a ransom, and die the just for the unjust, that God might be just in justifying them that believe; why God could not have forgiven, reconciled, and saved rebellious men, without this great sacrifice, this mysterious condescension, the shedding of this precious blood, this vast expense of the riches of divine grace; why, in a word, some other, and (if I may so speak without irreverence,) some cheaper method of redemption could not have been devised, consistently with the harmony of. the divine attributes, the honor of the divine law, the

stability of the divine government, and the glory of the divine nature; He only could fully know, whose knowledge is infinite; and he only could first tell, who has told us in his word, that thus it must be; that "the Son of man must be lifted up;" that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."

It is true, we may now see something of the design, learn something of the peculiar benefits, and behold something of the glory of this wonderful scheme of redemption; and may thus be able to meet objections,

And vindicate the ways of God to man.

But even now fully to comprehend it, in its origin, progress and completion, belongs not to finite intelligence. Originating in infinite benevolence, contrived by infinite wisdom, executed by infinite power, and producing infinite glory, the plan of man's redemption can be fully comprehended by no being, except by him, who possesses infinite knowledge.

But does the mystery of the doctrine diminish the importance of it to man? Shall the magnitude of the price of our redemption, the value of the ransom paid for us, the incomprehensible nature of the benefit offered, induce us to reject the great salvation? Will any despise the riches of divine grace, tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant, turn a deaf ear to the calls of mercy, do despite to the spirit of God, and obstinately perish in their sins; because the work of redemption involves a mystery; because they cannot fathom the depths of divine wisdom, nor comprehend all the counsels of Heaven? O, the folly; the presumption; the madness of depraved and short-sighted man!

The facts, that Christians are bought, or ransomed, or redeemed, with a price; that this price is the pre-

cious blood of Christ; that this atoning blood is applied, or made effectual to the cleansing of the soul from sin, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, producing faith in all who are saved: that this saving faith is of such efficacy and such a character, as to work by love, purify the heart, and yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness: these facts, I say, however mysterions in their connection with the counsels of infinite wisdom and the purposes of everlasting mercy, are in themselves, and in their relation to man, simple facts: and they are clearly revealed and definitely stated in the Scriptures. And these are sufficient to satisfy every humble mind; and furnish every ingenuous mind with lessons of gratitude, humility and obedi-The great lesson, however, which comprehends all other practical inferences from the doctrine, is that which the apostle deduces from it, in the last clause of our text: "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Thus am I naturally brought to the second general head of discourse; under which I shall briefly consider the import, and make a practical application of this comprehensive precept of the gospel.

II. "Therefore glorify God in your bedy and in your spirit, which are God's." To glorify God, as the phrase is used in the Scriptures, is to manifest that spirit and pursue that course of conduct, by which we honor his name, submit to his authority, obey his laws, proclaim his praises; in a word, by which we do his will on earth, as it is done in heaven. To glorify God in or with the body and spirit, therefore, is to consecrate to his service, all the powers and faculties with which we are endowed; to seek to know and endeavor to do his will, in all things, at all times and with all the heart. It is in substance, obedience, cor-

dial obedience, universal obedience to divine authority. I might, therefore, close the discourse, at once, by simply repeating the exhortation, and leaving every one to make the application to himself. Or with more directness and particularity, I might urge those who have hitherto disregarded this high authority, to repent and commence a course of holy obedience; and those who have already commenced this course, to persevere therein to the end; to be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; to look continually to this perfect rule of life, and strive to bring every act and every thought and every desire even, into obedience to this law of Christ.

But there are special purposes, to which the principle of this precept may be applied, for our admonition and improvement. Permit me, therefore, my hearers, as many of you as desire to know whether you are truly Christians; as many of you as indulge the hope that you are indeed Christians; and as many of you as wish to be Christians; permit me to call your serious attention to the application, which I am about to make of the subject.

1. In the first place, I apply the subject, by making the principle of the precept in the text, a test of character. Do any, then, wish to know, whether they are Christians—do you wish to ascertain, whether you are among those, to whom it may be said: "Ye are bought with a price;" whether the redemption, purchased by Christ has been so applied to you, as to render you partakers of the benefits of this redemption? Consider, then, what is the great object of your pursuit, and what the commanding motives of your actions. Do you "glorify God in your: body and in your spirit?" Does the will of God furnish both the rule and the motive of your habitual conduct?

I do not ask, whether you have never committed sin; for we are assured, by an authority not to be disputed, that "there is no man that liveth and sinneth not." But I ask, Have you been convinced of your sins, and led to repentance? Are you now living by faith on the Son of God, and daily walking humbly before him? Is it your ardent desire to learn, and your habitual endeavor to do, the will of your Heavenly Father? Have you consecrated to him all your powers? Are all your pursuits undertaken and continued; are all your faculties employed; is all your time appropriated; are all your possessions, acquired. held and used, with ultimate reference to his glory; with a prevailing regard to his rightful authority over you; with a spirit of entire submission and unreserved obedience to his will?

I do not ask, whether, since you first exercised repentance toward God, you have become perfect in holiness; whether your warfare with sin and temptation is ended; whether you have attained to the mark of your high calling, and reached "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ?" For imperfection, I know, is attached to every thing human, to every thing below the skies. But I do ask, have you commenced the Christian course; and are you daily pressing forward in that course? Are you growing in grace? Do you strive to become holy? Is regard to the glory of God your habitual and governing principle of action?

These inquiries, furnish the best criterion of Christian character; and if you neglect this, and adopt any other test, you will be liable to self-deception. If you simply compare yourselves with yourselves, or with one another, or with any human being, or any standard devised by man, you will never "know, what

spirit you are of;" or how you appear in view of Him, who looketh on the heart. If you merely regard your outward deportment: or trust to the evidence of temporary experience and transient emotions alone, you will remain ignorant of your real characters. For this outward deportment, however good in appearance and conformable to the rules of external morality, may arise solely from selfish motives and worldly policy; and this temporary experience and these transient emotions, however elevated and full of hope, may be the mere effect of sympathy, the simple result of passive impressions, the operation even of the spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience. Yes, I repeat it, the best criterion of character; I may add, the only safe criterion of Christian character, is exhibited by the principle involved in the precept of our text. Wherefore, examine yourselves, I beseech you, according to this rule; try yourselves by this test; and strive earnestly and continually to bring yourselves up to this perfect standard.

2. Again, I apply the principle involved in the preceptive part of the text, contemplated as a test of professional employment or stated business in life. Do you wish to decide, as a Christian, in what business you shall spend your days; to what profession or employment you shall devote your life; you have only to consider, what are the wants of mankind, and the claims of your country and the world; what are your peculiar talents, and the circumstances in which you are placed; and what, therefore, are the prospects of comparative usefulness, in the several pursuits, open before you. Or, you have only to ask, how you may most effectually glorify God with your body and your spirit. Or in more familiar language, you may inquire in what employment you can do the most good, and

stop, as thousands do, to inquire, in the spirit of shortsighted selfishness: "Who will show us any good?" How shall we best secure our own happiness? Your happiness, while you are in the path of duty, will take care of itself; or rather, I should say, it is secure in the hands of Him, to whom you have committed the keeping of your soul. Let your only inquiry then, be, what is duty? "what does the Lord my God, require of me?"

Do any wish to bring their present occupation, or principal employment, to the test of Christian principle; and thus learn, whether they are now in the path of duty, whether their present business ought to be abandoned, or still pursued, they have only to apply the same test. The same course of inquiry will solve this case of conscience likewise; and show them, whether they are in the true way of life, or whether their daily occupation must be changed, before they can be useful and happy. If you are engaged, in any profession or stated business, which will not promote the glory of God, which is not useful in itself, or for which you are not so qualified as to be useful in it; if you have commenced an employment, upon which you cannot consistently, and do not actually, seek the blessing of Heaven; or even if you are pursuing a stated employment, which is proper in itself, and for which you are well qualified, with such motives and in such a manner, as to render it inconsistent with the regular and faithful discharge of prescribed or previously existing duties; in either of these cases, your very business in life, your daily occupation is inconsistent with the claims of duty; and unless some change takes place, it will rise up and condemn you, in the day of indement.

3. Finally; I apply the principle of the exhortation in the text, viewed as a test of individual actions and particular habits; as a criterion, by which we may learn the propriety or impropriety of any existing custom or fashion, any special employment in which we occasionally engage, any peculiar manner of appropriating our time, or talents, or property; any acts which are not necessarily good or evil, in themselves; and which are not expressly enjoined nor prohibited in the word of God; more especially, that whole class of actions and pursuits usually denominated amusements, in all their varieties and forms.

By the careless and inconsiderate these things are viewed, as acts of indifference, neither virtuous nor vicious, neither good nor evil, neither sinful nor holy; and truly they are so in themselves, independent of their relations and tendencies. But they are not so, in their connections with other acts, and in their bearings on other beings; nor are they so viewed by Him, who has commanded us to do all things, with reference to his glory; and who has assured us, that he will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing." They are not so viewed by those who have been bought with a price, and actually redeemed from their vain conversation; who have devoted themselves sincerely and without reserve to the service of their God and Redeemer; who ardently desire and constantly endeavor to glorify God with their bodies and spirits; who, whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do, act under the influence of the same habitual principle of obedience to the divine will. To them, every custom, every habit, every indulgence of passion or appetite, every allowed practice or voluntary action, every appropriation of time or wealth or talents; everything, in a word, which has an influence on their capacity

for spiritual enjoyment or active benevolence, on their own characters or the characters and happiness of others, becomes a matter of importance, worthy of serious consideration and conscientious regard. In their view nothing is innocent, which is not useful; and nothing harmless, which evidently leads to evil, or prevents the accomplishment of the greatest good.\*

Now if Christianity requires this entire consecration of ourselves to God; if it should be our habitual desire and constant endeavor, to glorify him with all our powers, in body and in spirit; we may easily try the character of all those practices, which are frequently denominated acts of indifference, innocent amusements or harmless recreations, we may see their character in their tendency. For example; fix in your mind some particular practice, some prevalent custom; if you please, some fashionable amusement, which you wish to try by this test. Then, to learn, whether as a Christian, you may consistently perform the proposed act, consider whether it will promote the glory of God; will be agreeable to the will of God; will constitute true obedience and unreserved submission to the authority of God; and will thus correspond with the great design of your existence, as a rational moral and immortal being? Or you may ask, in other words, is it useful? will it promote my health? will it improve my mind? will it exert a

<sup>\*</sup> I know there are those, who repudiate the doctrine of utility altogether. What they assume to be right, they will do, irrespective of consequences. Though the tendency of an action, or practice may be ever so pernicious; and though they see this tendency, and anticipate mischief and misery, as the result; yet they will countenance it by their example and influence; because it is lawful, and in itself right. They forget the decision of an apostle, who said: "All things are lawful for me; but all things are not expedient:" "I will eat no more meat, while the world stands, if it cause my brother to offend." We are not, indeed, to resort to expediency, against right; much less against divine command. But nine times out of ten, actions depend on their utility for their moral character; and are right or wrong, as they are expedient or inexpedient.

beneficial influence on my temper? will it warm my heart with pious gratitude, or enlarge it with benevolence? will it excite in my bosom feelings of devotion, or establish me in principles of virtue? in a word, will it either enable or dispose me to do good; to promote the cause of truth and human happiness? Or you may pursue the inquiry in still another form; and consider before you engage in the proposed act, whether you can consistently retire into your closet, and ask a blessing upon it? and whether you can return from it, when accomplished, with satisfaction; and give thanks unto God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for the privilege of rational enjoyment and spiritual improvement, for the good you have thus received, or been enabled to accomplish?

By these and similar inquiries, we may learn, whether any practice, not expressly commanded or forbidden in the Scriptures, is innocent, proper, consistent with that self-dedication and entire consecration to God, which our text enjoins. And let none, who profess to be Christians, or indulge the hope of Christians, or even wish to become Christians, reject this system of casuistry, with the common and careless plea, that it is too rigid and austere. For it is the system which the gospel sanctions; and, therefore, the only system which will avail us in that day, when we shall all be judged, according to the gospel.

Let us, then, never forget, that we are expressly commanded, "whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God;" and that with the same universal application to the past, we are directed to "give thanks unto God, always, for all things, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us make this great principle the test of character, the criterion of employment, the rule of life. By it let us form our

purposes, appropriate our time, and regulate all our conduct.

To conclude; I exhort all, who profess to be Christians; all who purpose to be Christians; all who hope to be Christians, to bring their characters, their motives of action, their habits, their stated business, their occasional practices; yes, all their pursuits, all they devise and all they do, to this standard; and try them by this test. Christians, disciples of Christ, redeemed sinners, expectants of heaven; "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

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